

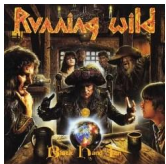
## Running Wild - Black Hand Inn (1994)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 07 April 2017 14:46 - Last Updated Wednesday, 02 January 2019 15:57

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1. *The Curse* 03:15 2. *Black Hand Inn* 04:32 3. *Mr. Deadhead* 04:02 4. *Soulless* 04:57 5. *The Privateer* 04:21 6. *Fight the Fire of Hate* 06:38 7. *The Phantom of Black Hand Hill* 06:25 8. *Freewind Rider* 05:15 9. *Powder & Iron* 05:18 10. *Dragonmen* 05:42 11. *Genesis (The Making and the Fall of Man)* 15:18  
Rock 'n' Rolf - Vocals, Guitars Jörg Michael - Drums  
Thomas "Bodo" Smuszynski - Bass Thilo Hermann - Guitars (lead)

Gotta give credit to Rolf for not only writing the same album for the fourth time, but for also making it one of the best in his career. Hearing *Black Hand Inn* is bittersweet, since although it is another album to cherish, it means one more in the last line of worthy albums. The band would still churn out other awesome material, but all of this feels so long ago that it is already a tale in the history. Next time you look in the history books, you'll see *Black Hand Inn* therein, and a nostalgic sigh will emit thereafter.

Just to get it out of the way, the sound of the drums can be a little grating for some. The bulky, boisterous bonks battering the listener every instant gives mixed signals: click-ish double bass? Dusty snares? Rattling cymbals? Did "Angelo Sasso" do guest drumming? No, they're real, and they aren't as bad as "Sasso's" contributions later on. Personally I think the drumming here fits just fine, and it's the upbeat assault of double bass with complete rhythm precision that makes Jörg Michael stand well in the rabble of drummers. Like all the players on this album, you can feel his utter control over the instrument. Switching gears to the other rhythm maintainer, the bass support grumbles like a hushed boat rudder. I do miss Becker's lead takeover, but I also love this low-end bubble-bass that compliments the refined speed / heavy metal attitude most present on songs like "Soulless". So infectious and thick; kick back and get dragged and burned by bass.

Rolf and company (whoever that consists of at any given time) have never let us down when it

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came to the guitar department, even on the later albums (barely) where production was the main problem. Here I was given more of the crunchy, cherished, commanding riffs, leads, solos, and straight-up barrages of speedy force. Seriously, harmonies are abundant from the conceptual intro, to the title track's riff-onslaught, and through the trilogy of monstrous anthems preceding the final closer. Every song has a tune that sticks with you for life, and I guarantee their warranty is a lifetime. It's impossible not to go berserk listening to beasts such as "The Privateer" or the groovy, drum / bass oriented "Fight The Fire Of Hate". The last track, "Genesis...", is the most epic on the album, naturally, with a ton of Maiden-competing solos, vicious riffs, and insane vocals.

Vocally I'd say Black Hand Inn contains some of Rolf's best moments, with the standard set at no less than awesome. He never sounds dull or exhausted, with plenty of those bellowing, gritty howls to encompass another three or four albums. The finale is the last straw, where the gargantuan scope and speed metal domination of the riffs collide with Rolf's gruff barks to make one of Running Wild's best tracks; track length be damned! Expect only authoritative, aggressive speed / heavy / power metal with crisp production, powerful (manly) vocals, and a plethora of cool, catchy riffs. There's no ditching that tone of royalty though, so while angry, it's still a chivalrous piece of work. I'd certainly rank this up there with Blazon Stone and Port Royal - maybe even slightly higher. Glad to know Rolf was able to muster a couple more novelties before meeting middle-aged burnout. --- OzzyApu, metal-archives.com

"Black Hand Inn" (ósmý album studyjny) to jedna z najlepszych płyt Running Wild. Powala na ziemię precyzją i dograniem najdrobniejszych szczegółów, jest bardzo szybka i rytmiczna. Płyta jest spójna tak, jakby był to jeden kilkudziesięciminutowy utwór. Klasyka gatunku. Od debiutu w 1984 roku bardzo się zmienili. To heavy metal wciąż w tym samym stylu, ale image już zupełnie inny i zupełnie inne teksty. Refreny już nie kilkusekundowe, ale o wiele dłuższe, tematyka egzystencjalna wpleciona w krwawe wojny na morzu, teksty pasujące do szant i stroje wojskowe z różnych epok. To już nie jest black metal.

Przejdźmy do samej płyty, bo jest o czym opowiadać. Pisząc recenzję "Gates To Purgatory" Running Wild z 1984 roku, odwoływałem się do płyt Metalliki z lat osiemdziesiątych. W roku 1994 takiego odniesienia już nie ma, drogi muzyczne obu tych kapel bardzo się rozeszły i porównania nie miałyby sensu. ...--- lived, rockmetal.pl

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