Mustasch – Killing It For Life (2019)

1 Where Angels Fear To Tread 4:02 2 Ransacker 5:13 3 Before A Grave Intro Vocals By Thomas Emblad 5:10 4 Freddie Mercury 4:50 5 Go To Hell (Bullethead) 4:20 6 Blood In Blood Out Guitar Solo – David Wilhelmsson 3:40 7 What Is Wrong 3:26 8 Garlic And Shots 5:00 Bass – Stam Drums – Robban Bäck Guitar – David Johannesson Vocals, Guitar, Keyboards [Keyboard] – Ralf Gyllenhammar

Facial fur

Mustasch are one of the very few bands named in homage to the facial hair of rock Gods Tony Iommi, Jon Lord and Freddie Mercury. In fact, we all know they’re the only ones and their uniqueness does not end there.

The Swedish hard (and I mean very hard) rockers have been around the block a few times, going through drummers and record labels in equal measure. Formed in the late 1990s Mustasch’s first EP was released in 2001, and have now released 10 albums, culminating in Killing It For Life.

The captain of this hirsute ship is undoubtedly guitarist/vocalist Ralf Gyllenhammer, whose drive and passion have been ever-present since day one. Gyllenhammer translates into English as ‘golden hammerhead’ which you must agree is awesome.

No compromise

Mustasch have been described as ‘uncompromising’ and I’m not going to argue with that. Intense, powerful and thoughtful are other adjectives that also spring to mind.

Mr. Golden Hammerhead’s voice is perfectly suited to their type of music; strong, full of balls and with no little threat.

Opener “Where Angels Fear to Tread” sets the album up perfectly with mega crunching riffs and Gyllenhammer in fine throaty form.

There’s more purity (at least occasionally) in the vocals on “Ransacker”, probably the most melodic track on the disc, but it is still tough as teak.

“Before a Grave” is a thoughtful number contemplating the feelings of loneliness and helplessness. It is a powerful track hitting just the right emotional note.

Hero

The most light-hearted track on Killing It For Life is a tribute to hero Freddie Mercury called, er, “Freddie Mercury”. A vast bulk of the lyrics are name-checking Queen songs which is fun when listening and trying to spot the songs. “Seaside Rendezvous” was my favourite one.

After homage to Freddie, it is back to business and the forceful “Go to Hell”. It’s bare on lyrics, with the only words being those of the title, but the music speaks for itself. Intense and uncompromising.

“Blood In, Blood Out” was the first single from Killing It For Life, which has been released on the band’s own Tritonus label. Whilst not exactly commercial, it has pace and rhythm aplenty, with Gyllenhammer on top screamy form.

#whatiswrong

For the latest single, “What Is Wrong”, Mustasch has teamed up with Swedish aid organization Mind to highlight the fact that an increasing number of men are taking their own lives. The aptly named #whatiswrong campaign has also been launched. As well as being a truly worthy cause, the song is spine-tingly awesome and gets the message across superbly.

“Garlic and Shots” brings proceedings to a close with quite a stripped-down affair. It has an early-Metallica feel albeit a bit less snarly.

Killed it

Overall, this is a top-quality album from these (and I’m sure they’ll thank me for this) veterans.

It is chock full of bollock-kicking power and a fair amount of pathos. I loved it, I hope you will too.
---Sparky, cgcmpodcast.com

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