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## PUNK 'N' DISORDERLY

BY ACEY SLADE

### NEKROMANTIX

To thy own self be true! No words ring clearer than when you look at the history of the Nekromantix. Hard to believe it, but in two years, Kim Nekroman's band of Psycho's will celebrate 20 years of psychobilly! Bet you didn't know *that*. In that time, they have had, Grammy nominations, world tours, several MTV appearances, a slew of singles, album releases, picture disks, and EPs).

When you look at the career of the **Nekromantix**, it's amazing how super-stardom has eluded the band and stopped them from becoming a household name. Many major label bands haven't had a fraction of their success, and it's all due to the Nekromantix being true to their formula. That being said, it's doubtful that these ghouls will ever reach *American Idol* appeal. It's also doubtful that they care about that!

Nekromantix do horror punk/psychobilly better than anyone. And here, on their seventh studio album it's clear that Kim Nekroman has put the hearse in the shop for a detailing and tune up. Confident in the vehicle that is Nekromantix's *Life Is A Grave And I Dig It* Kim takes the scenic route to the graveyard. *Life Is A Grave* is a classic psychobilly album in it stretches out a bit, but stays within all things horror, punk, psycho and/or rockabilly. But now, the faster parts are faster, the jazzy parts are jazzier, and lyrically, the bodies piling higher then ever!

The track listing is set up like a cruise though a '50s main street drag. It revs up between lights, only to slow down quickly to check out the girls. Getting things off to a jump-start with "NekroHigh" and easing in with "Horny In A Hearse," which boasts some seriously campy lyrics and real tasty guitar playing. Very smart chord phrasing catches your ear immediately. The title track "Life Is A Grave..." is played fast with complicated stops that are played precision-tight. The chorus is hooky as hell and will be stuck in your head for hours to follow. "My Girl" drives back down to a smooth and smokey lounge feel. "Rot In Hell" and "Voodoo Shop Hop" delivers us back into high gear. In a somewhat bipolar trance, the album drops down again with the tribal beat of "Cave Canem." "Flowers Are Slow" starts with a techno-sounding analog synth flavor, (though it may be Kim's trademark Coffin bass, with crazy effects thrown in). Somewhat unexpected, but as soon as the guitars kick in, there's no question that it's Nekromantix. "BEAST" and "Anaheim After Dark" stick with the fast/mid tempo-song formula, and this works very well throughout the album. But once we get to "Fantazma," we see yet another curve in the road, 'cause I would call this track horror-Western! The album fittingly and deliriously closes with "Panic At The Morgue" and the frantic, spastic freak-out of "Out Come The Bats."

It seems that the Nekromantix have an inexhaustible resource of rock a bill riffs and horror punk themes that leaves all the other bands in the genre buried in the dirt! Proving that while some bands just have no pulse, Nekromantix are the living dead and proud of it!

Nekromantix will be touring with fellow Hellcat bands, Orange, Heart Attacks and Time Again. For those not familiar, Orange are a LA based band of young upstarts who write pop punk (think Material Issue NOT Blink 182) classic rock anthems. The Heart Attacks are the self-proclaimed "gang of pirate gypsy crack head smart-mouthed snot-nosed rock & roll misfits," who has been managing to piss everyone off-AND happens to be great! And rounding out the bill is Time Again. This tour promises to be THE best package tour going around. •

