



# Only Death is Real: An Illustrated History of Hellhammer and Early Celtic Frost, 1981-1985

*Thomas Gabriel Fischer, Martin Eric Ain, Nocturno Culto (Introduction), Joel McIver (Foreword)*

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This formidable oversized hardcover runs 288 pages (including a 32-page color section), and combines hundreds of unseen early Hellhammer and Celtic Frost photos with a vast treasure trove of artwork and memorabilia. A substantial written component by Fischer details his upbringing on the outskirts of Zurich, Switzerland, and the hardships and triumphs he faced bringing the visions of his groundbreaking bands Hellhammer and eventually Celtic Frost to reality. In addition, the book includes an introduction by Nocturno Culto of Norwegian black metal act Darkthrone, and a foreword by noted metal author Joel McIver.

Without question Only Death Is Real goes farther than any other source in exploring the origins of underground heavy metal. The wealth of visual information is astounding, both in terms of documenting early 1980s headbangers and exposing the still-relevant imagery of the first Hellhammer and Celtic Frost photo sessions. On top of that, the written chapters combine Tom Fischer's often shocking stories with lengthy quotes from Martin Eric Ain and the other main Hellhammer members, explaining in intimately human terms how extreme metal was born.

## Only Death is Real: An Illustrated History of Hellhammer and Early Celtic Frost, 1981-1985 Details

Date : Published March 30th 2010 by Bazillion Points

ISBN : 9780979616396

Author : Thomas Gabriel Fischer , Martin Eric Ain , Nocturno Culto (Introduction) , Joel McIver (Foreword)

Format : Hardcover 288 pages

Genre : Music, Nonfiction, Art, Photography, Biography



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## **From Reader Review Only Death is Real: An Illustrated History of Hellhammer and Early Celtic Frost, 1981-1985 for online ebook**

### **Yoruk Ilhan says**

Great nostalgia with denim and leathers with a twist of first wave of black metal. Photos for every archivist who is into these subjects. Yes the guy is a little bir egomaniac, but hey, this is the foundation of Celtic Frost, so please shut up.

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### **Alejo says**

A very compelling read with great pictures, you can really feel the struggle of Tom Warrior to make it, first with Hellhammer and later with the beginning of Celtic Frost. The only thing I found irksome are the constant remarks of not having computer or internet back in the day, we get it, some of us also remember those days. But all in all, an excellent book.

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### **Michael Fredette says**

Only Death is Real is a profusely illustrated oral history of Hellhammer and Celtic Frost, covering the period 1981-85 with the release of Celtic Frost's debut *Morbid Tales*. Fischer recounts his miserable childhood, living in squalor with his mother (who was a smuggler of unmentioned contraband) a cat hoarder. Fischer describes growing up in a house befouled by animal waste, having his toys floating in cat piss. Heavy metal music becomes his escape in adolescence and he progresses from Black Sabbath Vol. 4, Uriah Heep, Zeppelin, and Rainbow to the New Wave of British Heavy Metal (particularly Venom and Angel Witch) which was hugely influential on the nascent European black metal scene.

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### **Guy M says**

It's pretty marvelous to quite literally witness the evolution of one of the most important musical acts of all time in conjunction with Fischer's emotionally theatrical narration. The contributions by Ain are particularly great as well. If reading this doesn't make you want to go rent a bunker and create aural impurity with some buddies, you're doing something wrong.

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### **Doug says**

Excellent read. Being the same age as Tom, but living in Canada, I often felt the same way as he did - never really connecting with anyone who loved extreme music as much as me. I could really relate to his honesty and confusion in my youth. How I wish I would have connected with them in my youth through Penbangers. Fantastic book IMHO.

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### **Nate says**

so many great pictures in here. hellhammer were fucking killer and this more than redeems warrior's pretentious autobiography where he slags off the band as childish noise. fuck that. hellhammer were the shit and infinitely more heavy and interesting than the later goth rock garbage and sissy glam metal he'd do later. morbid tales and to mega therion were great and all, but after that theres a sharp decline in quality. its good to see a very well done book that covers the real deal

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### **Death Metal says**

This book about the early years of Hellhammer would be compelling for its content, written by the main composer of the band itself, but it also brings a mass-load of excellent photographs to the table, and is edited and written well such that there is no redundancy or off-topic woolgathering. Instead, we get a clear picture of the youth of Tom G. Warrior and his musical influences, as well as the shaping of his and Martin Ain's thought that led to the creation of the classic Hellhammer work "Apocalyptic Raids" and the early Celtic Frost material. Parts of this are quite poignant and well-stated, showing the conflict of youth and adulthood, especially when adulthood is broken and insane.

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### **Terence says**

Tedious but interesting. Some great images and ephemera from an early purveyor of dark music.

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### **Ramakrishnan M says**

phenomenal history. absolutely mind blowing to read of the struggles faced by Tom g warrior and co...in building he'll hammer and then eventually Celtic frost

read it to be inspired

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### **Graham says**

This book is killer for its comprehensive collection of photos and documentation of Hellhammer/early Celtic Frost. The descriptions offered by various members provide some insight, but rely really heavily on reminding the reader of how hard everything was before the internet and how easy the kids today have it. Great book for metal fans, though. Probably not for anybody else.

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### **Ridge Briel says**

A wonderful book that encapsulated the prototype of one of the most important bands in metal today. I loved browsing the photos, most especially the fanzine facsimiles at the end. I sincerely hope Tom Gabriel Fischer writes more books like this detailing Celtic Frost, Triptykon, and Apollyon Sun, among also his various contributions to other bands as well.

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### **Lori says**

I'm sorry Celtic Frost, but I just can't finish this book. I tried so hard, but reading about concert dates and line-up changes is just not that exciting. This book needs a little spice...

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### **Simon Harvey says**

This proved a truly excellent way to spend a lazy Sunday afternoon in the recliner with a few tall cans of Pilsner Urquell. I only listened to Hellhammer and Celtic Frost for the next couple days, too.

It's a much better read than you might imagine, and a fine visual companion piece to Warrior's ridiculously entertaining memoir "Are You Morbid?".

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