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## My humble opinion

Notorious punk rocker GG Allin releases his prison journal from beyond the grave

# Off the Walls

They threw the book at GG Allin. And he's flinging it back from beyond the grave.

Hey, be glad that's all he's flinging. Back in his '80s and '90s heyday, the deliberately repugnant punk degenerate was more likely to throw punches (and his own feces) at foe and fan alike. So it's no wonder the uncompromising anti-authoritarian — who lived stupidly, died young and left a bloated, foul-smelling corpse two decades ago — sometimes found himself on the wrong side of a cell door. But it is surprising that during one stint for assault, he was organized enough to pen a prison journal titled *30 Days in the Hole*. And forward-thinking enough to preserve it next to his jailhouse artwork, poetry and correspondence with everyone

from his mom to John Wayne Gacy. Even more remarkable: Someone decided to compile it into a book.

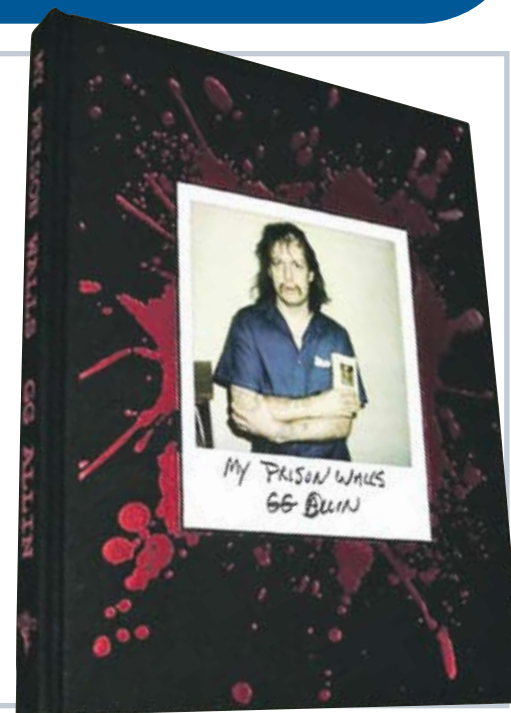
Not just any book, either. GG Allin: *My Prison Walls* (\$49.95, Aggronautix) is a bona fide collectors item: Hardcover. Full colour. Hefty stock. Wrapped in black cloth. Adorned with a replica Polaroid. Limited to 2,500 numbered copies. Which is to say: Way too classy for the man who sang *Drink, Fight & F---*, *Eat My Diarrhea* and *Expose Yourself to Kids*.

Thing is, as you sift GG's handwritten musings and missives, you realize he wasn't always as monstrous and/or moronic as he seemed. Sure, he spends a lot of time scrawling semi-coherent messianic drivel

midway between Manson and Gacy. Even more remarkable: Someone decided to compile it into a book. Not just any book, either. GG Allin: *My Prison Walls* (\$49.95, Aggronautix) is a bona fide collectors item: Hardcover. Full colour. Hefty stock. Wrapped in black cloth. Adorned with a replica Polaroid. Limited to 2,500 numbered copies. Which is to say: Way too classy for the man who sang *Drink, Fight & F---*, *Eat My Diarrhea* and *Expose Yourself to Kids*.

Is it a definitive memoir? No way. Nor is it meant to be. But *My Prison Walls* does serve one function: It goes beneath Allin's home-made tats and impenetrable wall of defiance, allowing a glimpse of the self-styled rock 'n' roll terrorist's heart and smarts. Too bad we didn't see them when he was alive.

— Sterdan



## Singled out

Sampling the pop songs you're hearing

### Lady Gaga

Applause

Legitimate leak or canny con by a master media manipulator? We may never know the truth behind the arrival of Gaga's first single from *ARTPOP*. But here's one thing that's not in doubt: That tale is likely far more intriguing than this predictably generic dance-pop trifle. Boo.

★ ★ 1/2

### Katy Perry

Roar

Oh dear. "I got the eye of the tiger," Perry belts out on her new single. "And you're gonna hear me roar." No, seriously. Those really are the lyrics to the first song from her Oct. 22 disc *Prism*. Even more insipid: They're set against anthemic, blandly soaring synth-pop. Snore.

★ ★

### Nine Inch Nails

Copy of A

Nobody can say Trent Reznor is not an original. Except maybe him. The latest glimpse of NiN's Sept. 3 disc *Hesitation Marks* is a dark slice of classic Trent, with tensely restrained vocals layered atop a tightly wound construct of drum-machines and sequencers. Copy that.

★ ★ ★ 1/2

## In the pipeline

The albums and artists to listen for in the weeks ahead

Aug. 27

**AlunaGeorge**  
Body Music

**Black Joe Lewis**  
Electric Slave

**Little River Band**  
Cuts Like a Diamond

**Avenged Sevenfold**  
Hail to the King

**Franz Ferdinand**  
Right Thoughts, Right Words, Right Action

**Michael Monroe**  
Horns and Halos

**Big Sean**  
Hall of Fame

**Goodie Mob**  
Age Against the Machine

**The Rides**  
Can't Get Enough

**Bob Dylan**  
The Bootleg Series Vol. 10: Another Self Portrait (1969-1971)

**Jars of Clay**  
Inland

**Play it**

Music on DVD and Blu-ray

★ ★ ★ 1/2

**Dio**

Finding the Sacred Heart: Live in Philly 1986

A medieval castle! Neon swords! A fire-breathing dragon with laser eyes! It doesn't come any cheesier than this 100-minute show from Ronnie James Dio.



Katy Perry



Big Sean

## Best of the Rest

More of the new music available this week

### Honey Island Swamp Band

Cane Sugar

Bayou Americana is what these New Orleans dudes call their sound. You might call it a sweet 'n' tasty gumbo of sounds and styles, with everything from The Band to Little Feat to Dr. John in the mix. Or you might just call their third album what it is: A treat.

★ ★ ★

### Jazzinvaders feat. Dr. Lonnie Smith

That's What You Say!

The Doctor is in. And in good company. Turban-topped organ king Smith joins forces with this Dutch septet for a fast-paced set of '70s jazz-funk anchored by propulsive backbeats, spurred by punchy horns and wah-wah guitar, and graced with Smith's burbling B3.

★ ★ ★ 1/2

### Truth & Salvage Co.

Pick Me Up

More preservation than salvage, really. These Nashville rootsers' sophomore album harkens back once again to the '60s and '70s sounds of The Band, the Allmans, Doug Sahm and the like — but adds just enough contemporary touches to stay fresh. One man's trash, etc.

★ ★ ★

### Kalmah

Seventh Swamphony

Yes, *Swamphony*. And no, I don't know why. While these fiendish Finns embrace orchestral grandeur on their seventh outing, their sound is built not on Sabbath sludge but the sweeping power of melodic death metal with sulphurous vocals. At least they don't get bogged down.

★ ★ ★



Ronnie James Dio