

June 16, 2005

DEAD BOYS

Live at CBGB's 1977

(Music Video Distributors, 2005)

The Dead Boys were part of the original punk golden age that coalesced around CBGB's in the late 1970s, and this is an entertaining 10-song set, professionally shot and edited for a television special about punk that, understandably, never aired. Lead singer Stiv (pronounced "Steve") Bators has a whole bagful of punk rock stage tricks, including pinning a slice of bologna to his shirt, then peeling it off and blowing his nose into it, then eating it, then picking up some gum off the floor to clear his palate. He's not all theatrics either, as his singing on such classics as "Sonic Reducer" attests. Guitarist Cheetah Chrome plays up a storm, and the band sounds sloppy/great. If you have ever wondered what it was like to attend a full-tilt punk show back in the day, this is as close as you can get without a time machine.

- Charles Donelan

IGGY POP

Live San Fran 1981

(Target Video, 2005)

This is Iggy in a tight black miniskirt, fronting a great band that includes Blondie drummer Clem Burke, and playing a set that includes such Stooges' material as "1969" and "T.V. Eye." What more could you ask for? Well, maybe a little more energy from Iggy, for starters. It's not that his performance is bad; it's just that for Iggy, he is somewhat subdued. Is it the drugs, or was he coming down with something? We'll never know, but in the meantime, it is still a punk blessing to have this fascinating document of the greatest lead singer and bandleader of the era backed by a tight, professional group playing great songs. So what if the album he was touring with (Party) isn't his best? This is Iggy, and you had to be there, and now you can. Thanks, Target, you've hit the punk nostalgia bulls-eye again. Put your TV eyes on this.

- CD