

CAPTAIN BEEFHEART



Under Review

AN INDEPENDENT CRITICAL ANALYSIS

of these otherwise elusive artists. The Captain Beefheart release features interviews, vignettes and archival footage that further illustrate the subtle punk connection,

if you look for it.

GG Allin went far beyond the realms of punk with his over-the-top, nihilistic behavior. Equal parts performance art visionary and depraved sociopath, Allin was infamous for his stage antics that often utilized sharp objects, blood, urine and human feces—I shit you not! A new DVD release showcases Allin and crew on their final tour before his untimely demise in 1993. *Terror In America: Live 1993* (MVD) has Allin performing at his gut wrenching angriest during three different gigs. The video quality is adequate, but it's not like you need hi-def treatment for this stuff, and I'm sure ol' GG wouldn't have wanted it any other way. The sound quality is the about the same, but again, I digress. I warn you, this DVD is not for the faint of heart, but it exemplifies the extreme end of hardcore, where the fine line between art and chaos can be easily blurred.

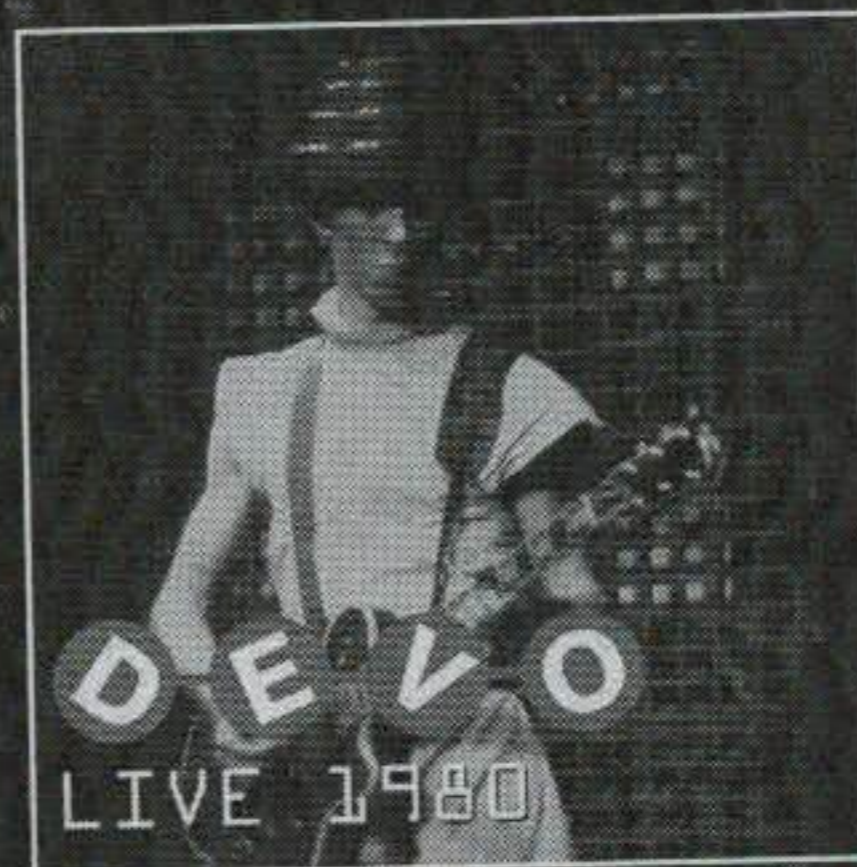
The *Live 1980* (MVD) features a full-length concert from one of the most innovative rock 'n' roll bands of the past three decades: Devo. In my mind, if you strip away the synths

and production values from many a Devo song, what you have is pretty much a straight-up rock band, with great riffs and big hooks—just look at songs “Freedom Of Choice” or “Gates Of Steel” for proof. This DVD captures the band at the height of its popularity, just after scoring a huge hit with “Whip It.” The concert has the band in full

regalia, red hats and all, burning through many of its hits like “Girl U Want,” “Mongoloid” and “Secret Agent Man,” and they sound much tougher in concert. The picture quality is nice, and it's a great live document of the band in its prime. For more information on these DVDs. Go to www.musicvideodistributors.com.

Elsewhere on the DVD front is a batch of punk-related stuff from London's great Cherry Red label. First,

the Gun Club fashioned its style on combining the rawness of punk, cosmic lyrics, twang guitars, and lots of illicit substances. Led by the inimitable Jeffrey Lee Pierce, the band's brash, earthy approach comes across full-force on *Live At The Hacienda*. The band runs through a number of Gun Club standards like “Fire Of Love” and “Hey Juana.” While teetering on the edge of a breakdown, Pierce and the band were essential part of the period where the punk influence eventually made its way toward country rock. The DVD's technical quality



is not the greatest, but the band's looming presence comes across in spades, with lots of close-ups of Pierce on the verge of losing it.

Nico was not only easy on the eyes, but an important musical influence, especially

where the gothic rock scene was concerned. The statuesque, German chanteuse made a name for herself while working with the Velvet Underground on their best album, *The Velvet Underground and Nico*. But on her own Nico's somber and deep textural tones on the *Marble Index* album would prove to be immensely influential on the gothic rock scene a few years later. *All Tomorrow's Parties* is a DVD chronicle of a few live appearances Nico



performed during the early '80s. Recently discovered, no one's really sure of the exact dates of these shows. And the single-camera view is less-than-stellar, but the singer's discomfited presence and fragile beauty set against a backdrop of dark and depressing proto-

goth rock make this release an interesting live testimonial for fans—even if her once svelte physique has obviously expanded.

Although virtually unheard of on these shores, psychobilly pros King Kurt made a big impression in England during the early '80s with a loud, exciting faux-50s rock 'n' roll sound, massive

