

# DVD Reviews

## BAD BRAINS

LIVE AT CBGB 1982

I was between 12 and 15-months-old when this footage was recorded of the Bad Brains, considerably the greatest punk rock band to ever exist. The band relocated to NYC from their native D.C. due to myriad circumstances, which auspiciously led to the iconic "Banned in D.C.," a 2:12 blast where H.R. disdainfully declared, "You can't hurt me." That seemed to be the epithet of the time, and the kids at CBGB during these sets do their best to exemplify.

The best thing about Live at CBGB is the feel. How fast they played, how powerful and shocking they were—it all came so naturally to the Bad Brains, and to their audience. But this shit is long gone. By the '90s, the ugly was just plain ugly, arguably the opposite of punk rock.

But it did happen. And this is awesome footage of an amazing band at a historic venue that, by the time you read this, will no longer exist.

## Christian Hosoi: Rising Son

3QD / Quiksilver

This DVD documents the remarkable career of California skate-god Christian Hosoi, from his humble start as Tony Alva's sidekick, to the pro skater, preacher and recovered meth-addict he is today.



As *Some Kind of Monster* is to Metallica, you do not need to be a fan of Christian Hosoi or even skateboarding to enjoy *Rising Son*. It's a quintessential tale of the '80s: Kid who doesn't come from much uses his talents to become a globetrotting millionaire, only to lose it all to addiction. The '80s were remarkably carnal, and that decade managed to swallow a lot of talent.

Which is strange when you think about it. In the '60s and the beginning of the '70s, people weren't full on aware of the damage they were doing to themselves by sniffing and injecting. It claimed the lives of rock stars here and there, but it couldn't happen to you. In the '80s, everyone knew meth, blow and H would kill you, but people just did it anyway.

Hosoi was one of them. Through the fist hour of the movie you wish you were him, and in the second you thank god you weren't. But he survived, and the footage does a great job of capturing what he meant to the world, and to his friends.

## ISIS

*Clearing the Eye*

Ipecac Recordings

*Clearing the Eye* is the first DVD Isis has released. It features a video for *Panopticon* track "In Fiction." I cannot tell you how good this video is. Nor can I tell you how bad it is. It's incredibly abstract, although I do understand the concept that we're all being watched is *Panopticon's* underlying message as well as the video's. I don't really see the big deal about this, especially because if you use a credit card or pay rent (read: are alive) you're unwittingly giving the thumbs up anyhow.

The rest of the DVD showcases Isis doing what they do best: rocking live audiences in small clubs throughout the world with their unique brand of ambient metal. They brood eerily betwixt songs while making dissonant sounds through the use of several single compact effect units. This has been done to shit, but at least they were almost first at it.

## Style Wars: Revisited

I've seen *Style Wars* more than I would like to admit. For me, it has very little to do with the art or the lawlessness of early hip-hop (graff, rap and breaking, mind you), which took place during the '70s and early '80s in New York City. It's more that the footage opens your mind to the events leading up to hip-hop, which, believe it or not, used to be a reactionary art form.

There are two ways to view Robert Moses: an evil Fascist or a genius. Either or, he is the creator of the modern city. While his title, New York City's Park Commissioner, seems harmless enough, Moses was astoundingly powerful. He constructed bridges and highways with a limitless budget provided by the paid tolls of New York City's commuters as well as electrical billings. He also dislocated hundreds of thousands of people, and destroyed the residential culture of the South Bronx and Brooklyn in favor of super highways. The majority of New York City is not aesthetically pleasing. It's a lot of steel and a lot concrete.

Naturally, kids decided to draw on it.

This was a big deal. Hip-hop had a polarizing effect on people, almost as much as Moses, who, however indirectly, had a hand in creating it. *Style Wars* does a great job at capturing why they did what they were doing—though none of the writers, breakers, or emcees seem particularly apt at explaining it. But hip-hop did make a valid point: You can put up as many walls and as much twisting steel as the taxpayers can afford, but you can never control what's going to happen to it.

There are some nice bonus features in here that fans of the movie will enjoy. I'm not going to ruin any of them. Okay, just one: Skeme joined the Armed Forces! Man, I would have never expected that shit to happen.

