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## A Communal Life in Film and DVD, Examined



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## Guns N' Roses DVD Collector's Box



This entry was posted on 2/11/2007 9:06 AM and is filed under [DVD Reviews](#).

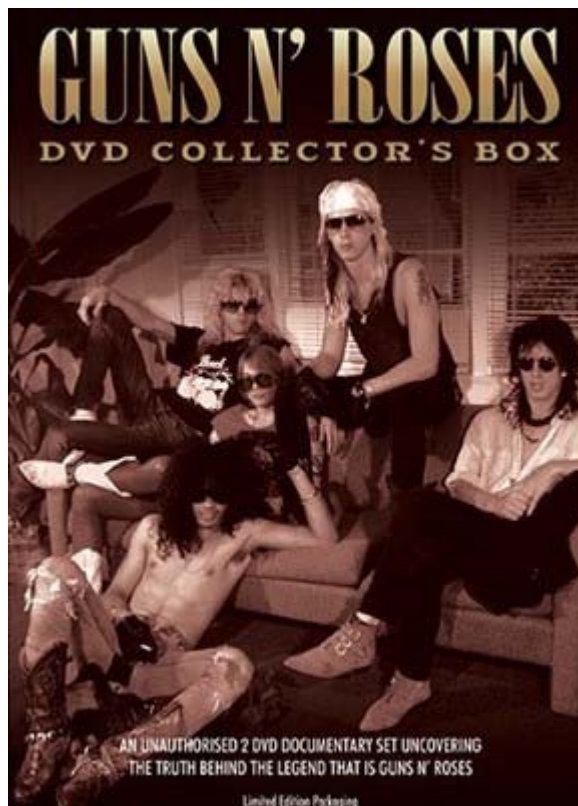
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No one really knows if *Chinese Democracy*, the fabled **Guns N' Roses follow-up album, will ever really see the light of day.** In fact, democracy might break out in the *real* mainland China before that happens. But one thing is for certain: no matter the extraordinary degree of their ill-fated reunion at the *MTV Movie Awards* a few years back (and make no mistake, that *was* awful, and not just because Slash was subbed out for a guy named Buckethead), **in their heyday in the 1980s Guns N' Roses plain kicked ass. "Big time," as Dick Cheney would say.**

Fronted by slithery, enigmatic singer Axl Rose, they were the epitome of all that hairspray metal bands aspired to, and then some. The biggest group on the planet for a few short years, they sold 50 million albums and created a hard rock sound all their own before imploding in the **all-too-predictable haze of drugs, alcohol, in-feuding and recrimination.** *The Guns N' Roses DVD Collector's Box* is a two-DVD set that features an unauthorized biography and culls together extant interview footage with band members, close friends and industry colleagues, family members and the like, along with a good bit of performance footage. With unpublished photographs, location shoot footage and more, it all rounds together for a nice gift for the super-hardcore fan that has everything... except the new material that Axl Rose won't release. Casual fans, though, can rest easy, waiting for the onslaught of officially sanctioned, slightly more polished memorabilia that would no doubt accompany any official reunion tour or project.

The first title herein is *Axl Rose: The Prettiest Star*, which may be the silliest, most fey name for any sort of

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accompanying piece of celebratory biography I've ever heard. With interviews from former manager Vicky Hamilton, guitarist Chris Weber, Robert John and the like, this is a look back at Axl in the glam-rock days of the '80s, charting the deprivation and isolation of his youth, his arrival in Los Angeles from Lafayette, Indiana as basically a runaway and his early escape into the drug-and-party-fueled music scene. More directly titled is *Sex N' Drugs N' Rock N' Roll* (duh!), which churns up some good dirt on the decidedly well-earned bad-boy reputation of the group (Duff McKagan seems to have had a thing for public urination). There's not much really new here, but it's a nice, rowdy trip down memory lane, and a look back at a time when rock stars could be counted on to be less eloquent and more self-destructive and devastatingly entertaining than the leader of the free world. Ahh, those were the days...

Presented in 4:3 format on region-free discs, these titles come packaged in their own Amray slipcases, which are in turn stored in a nice, sealable, cardboard slipcover. Extra features are just so-so, with a trivia section, a lengthy band quiz and an interactive discography. More framing critical discourse would have been welcome, but hey — this ain't academia, I guess. You're in the jungle, baby... **C (Movies) C+ (Discs)**

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