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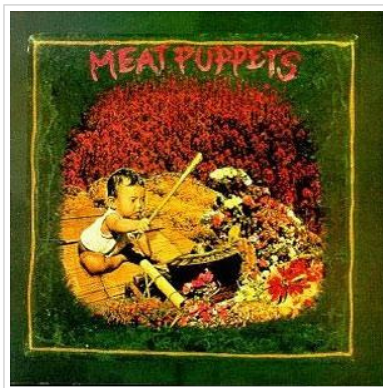
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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 01, 2011

Meat Puppets - "Meat Puppets" CD Review (MVD Audio)

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(posted to [MeatPuppets.com](#) by Meat Puppets drummer Derrick Bostrom)



I can't imagine how today's RIAA-fueled culture of paranoia would have reacted to the hardcore bands of the early 80's giving away songs to fanzines and one-off cassette compilations. MVD's reissue of the Meat Puppets self-titled full-length debut contains the original 14 track disc (from 1982), the band's first five-track recording ("In a Car" EP) from 1981, along with an additional thirteen tracks of previously unreleased studio sessions and

tracks from various compilations. Adding to the fun, the disc also contains a Quicktime video of the band performing "Walking Boss" at Target Video's studio in San Francisco.

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This disc was the Meat Puppets hardcore album but there are some hints of the sun-baked cow punk that was to follow on the Puppets later albums. The sound on this disc is raw and loud and most of the songs are over in the blink of an eye and a burst of speed. Curt Kirkwood stated: *"The first [album] was our LSD record. We were three days in the studio, and we tripped the whole time. And it was really cool, and really trying, too, because we went insane."*

Like many of the hardcore bands of that time, the songs were often recorded live, in single-take sessions. Derrick Bostrom recalls that *"Meat Puppets was recorded live. So live that there wasn't even any separation. We just set up the way we play onstage. Pretty much everything you hear on that record is just the drums and what's bled through 'em, and the vocals put on [later]. So that was a very raw project, and it sounds like it. You can hear the room. You can hear the direct signal, like the bass going [simulated loud crackling noise], and then you can hear everything else bleeding into the mikes on the drums."*

Where the Puppets showed that they weren't afraid to break from the hardcore pack is in their choice of cover tunes. Obviously NOT sharing punk's hatred of hippies and country music, the band covers "I Am A Child" (Neil Young), "Franklin's Tower" (Grateful Dead), Doc Watson's "Walking Boss" and Sons of the Pioneers "Tumbling Tumbleweeds". Adding to the potential confusion of the listener, the band's lyrical themes ranges from odes to weed ("Blue-Gold God") to twisted Bible imagery.

Given all this, I can't imagine the Puppets had much in common with their hardcore contemporaries at that time. In an old Goldmine article on the Puppets, Thurston Moore is quoted as saying: *"When they first started, they*

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were just so fuckin' weird. They were really twisted. They would come out and play a hundred songs, each one shorter than the last. Singing this Mickey Mouse gobbledy-gook. Then they'd break into a 20-minute Grateful Dead thing. The audience just did not know what to think of these guys. And they had long hair which was unheard of."

There were some pretty influential punk discs that came out in 1982 - The Misfits - *Walk Among Us*, Dead Kennedys - *Plastic Surgery Disasters*, Flipper - *Album* and Bad Brains - ROIR cassette - and the Meat Puppets debut full-length has earned its place among these discs.

Links:

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POSTED BY MIKE AT 8:00 PM

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