



THIS WEEK: *Twilight* ...



LOCALIZED

Oppressor, *The Solstice Of Agony And Corrosion*



By [Dave Hofer](#) November 12, 2009

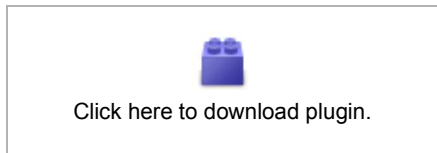
When it comes to reissues of hard-to-find music, death metal repeatedly gets shafted; fans are usually stuck with YouTube clips and downloads from blogs. Because of that, the announcement that Mt. Prospect-based technical death-metal band Oppressor was getting the CD/DVD anthology treatment is a cause for celebration. Although you'd never guess it by Soil—subsequent band formed by three-fourths of Oppressor—Oppressor helped pave the way for complex, riff-heavy death me in the '90s alongside fellow Chicagoans Broken Hope, Maryland's [Dying Fetus](#), and New York's Internal Bleeding. The son mix palm-muted ferocity, clean, melodic breaks, and groove-laden, pummeling beatdown riffs.

The Solstice Of Agony And Corrosion collects a few songs from each of the band's three full-lengths. They don't flow chronologically; a song from their first album doesn't appear until the fifth track, discouraging listeners from skipping over the less-developed material. Older songs like "Seasons" sound like a bunch of complex parts stuck together and growled over—single notes picked incredibly fast with generic blast beats underneath and monotonous grunting on top. Newer material such as "Upon The Uncreation" flows logically from riff to riff, still complex but with wiser minds behind it, as evidenced by varied drum patterns and a higher-register, more intelligible growl.

The DVD portion includes a live set from the Whisky in Hollywood and a few songs from other shows—all camcorder foota

with varying sound quality, and mostly from the band's U.S. tour with [Cannibal Corpse](#), [Immolation](#), and [Brutal Truth](#). The photos from the insert are presented as a slideshow, allowing you actually see them (the pictures in the booklet are tiny), and the two interviews included give insight into the lifestyle of a young band trying to make it. Overall, the DVD serves as a nice piece of archival material, preserving the band's hard work over its ass-busting eight-year existence.

A fine example to other labels when giving lesser-known bands their due, *Solstice* combines good song selection, live footage that's not already available elsewhere, and artwork that doesn't look cheap. It's a well-executed glimpse into Chicago's often overlooked and storied metal past. **Grade: B+**



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