

# OPTICAL DISILLUSION



Dimmu Borgir  
*The Invaluable Darkness*  
Nuclear Blast

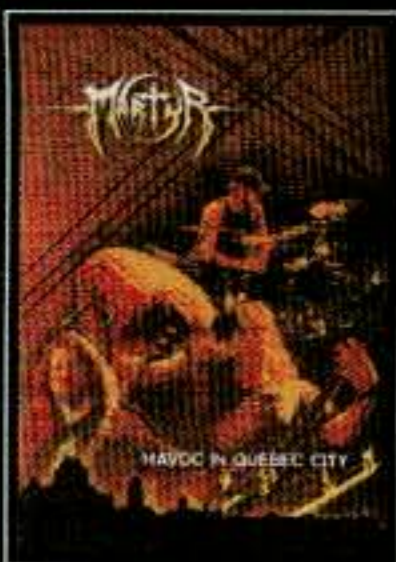
Following the same format of their first DVD release, 2002's *World Misanthropy*, Dimmu Borgir's latest home-viewing extravaganza is comprised of three discs — two DVDs and one CD, packaged in an attractive slipcase. Whereas *World Misanthropy* unfolded into an inverted cross, *The Invaluable Darkness* is housed in the traditional three-panel case, but comes with a 36-page booklet full of photos and lyrics.

Co-produced by Dimmu guitarist Silenoz, *The Invaluable Darkness* offers two audio options: 5.1 Surround Sound or Stereo. Disc one has a running time just shy of three hours. Its main feature is the 2007 European Tour in support of the *In Sorte Diaboli* album. A total of 17 songs are performed: 11 in Oslo, Norway, four in Berlin, Germany and two in London, England. Unfortunately the stages are awash in darkness. The minimal lighting and even sparser pyrotechnics, combined with a smaller, confined sound make it tough to watch at times. If the Special Features option is selected, when a symbol appears in the corner of your screen, hit enter on the remote — or click your mouse — and you'll be guided down "The Road To Ruin, The Pathway To Perdition." What this means is, you'll have access to interviews and drunk-

en tour bus shenanigans. Wrapping up the first disc is the infamous, although only semi-interesting, "Behind The Scenes", highlighting time spent in airports, dressing rooms, sound check and at the ESP guitar factory.

Disc two fares much better! Its running time clocks in at two hours, 25 minutes. Beginning with Dimmu absolutely ruling the Black Stage at the 2007 edition of the prestigious Wacken Open Air Fest — this 14-song performance totally eclipses the footage found on disc one, both in audio and visual quality. Truly a must see show! Add to that the band's six promo videos and an ultra cool photo gallery. Wrapping it up is live footage of three of the 12 songs found on the CD — the P3 Session, taped September '07 at a television studio in Norway. Add it all up and you have over five hours of *Invaluable Darkness*.

[dimmu-borgir.com] — Aaron Small



Martyr  
*Havoc In Quebec City*  
Galy

Technical French Canadian death/thrashers Martyr have been around since 1990, with just three studio platters to their name. Originally inspired by the likes of Forbidden, Coroner and countrymen Voivod, all a bit off-kilter outfits, it's easy to see where their polyrhythmic structure, utilizing odd signatures

was spawned. At nearly two hours, the 15 songs from the Imperial are augmented by four other live cuts, including Voivod's bassist Blacky joining Martyr on "Brain Scan." Sort of an odd DVD, as once you push Play Concert there's no intro or titles, just the band launching into "Lost In Sanity." A multi-camera affair, there's lots of obtuse angles (in keeping with their outlook, including bonus cut "Virtual Emotions" focused entirely on the drummer).

In addition to the performance footage, there's also an in-depth 55-minute documentary which interviews nearly everyone ever associated with the band; ex-members, producers etc. interspersed with old live clips or vintage stills. While Trivium's Matt Heafy gushes about Martyr — he's the only English speaker in the cast — the remainder of the dialogue delivered in the native tongue, with Anglicized subtitles. [martyr-canada.com] — Mark Gromen



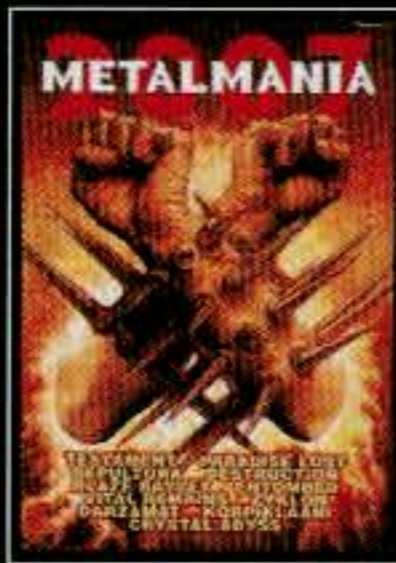
Hatebreed  
*Live Dominance*  
Koch

Regardless of your (or my) personal opinion of Hatebreed's music, this DVD is one of the most professional looking and sounding music DVDs to come down the pike in not-too-distant memory. It was shot in hi def, with several camera angles and split screens providing a panoramic view of the crowd and

the band. The DVD features dozens of frenetic and chaotic shots of a sold out, March 2008 show at Detroit's notorious (and dangerous) Harpo's. If you've never been to a Hatebreed show, the DVD effectively demonstrates the carnage-producing moshpits the band elicits

from its lunky fans. The set list draws from the band's entire catalog, with classics like "Before Dishonor," "Last Breath," "Empty Promises" and "I Will Be Heard" smattered throughout. There's no doubt that Hatebreed did considerable damage to the floor of Harpo's during this show. Usually, a music DVD centers on a ho-hum performance and lots of mystique-shattering backstage footage providing a more personal snapshot of the band. *Live Dominance* is the rare DVD where the performance is more compelling than the extras and odds and sods. *Live Dominance* asserts Hatebreed's bone-liquefying metallic hardcore assault. I walked away from this concert document happily exhausted, like I just came home from the show. If that's not the point of a live DVD, what is?

[hatebreed.com] — Amy Sciarretto



Various Artists  
*Metal Mania Festival 2007*  
Metal Mind

It appears the Polish festival scaled back to just one DVD this year. Then again, perhaps the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2006 warranted the extra treatment. Regardless, the '07 show chronicled here still

includes an audio CD bonus (although the "value" of the included acts is debatable). From the

Metal Mind home turf of Katowice, this is another colorful, multiple-camera shoot (like all their DVDs). While headlining Testament get five clips, the second-on-the-bill Paradise Lost are afforded just one with "Say Just Words!" The 30-track video compilation begins slowly, the usually joyful Korpiklaani offering a direful "Tuli Kokko" and glorified "Pellonpekko" intro before the full-on humppa polka of the lone English lyric "Wooden Pints." There's a trio of faceless (well, corpse-painted) black metal bands before a Zyklon threesome ("Underdog," "Wrenched" and "Psyklon Aeon"). Vital Remains, Entombed (new stuff: "When In Sodom," "Carnage" and the debut's "Revel In Flesh"), Destruction, Blaze Bayley and Sepultura also all work in threes. Of those, the Brazilians doing long-forgotten "Dead Embryonic Cells" and Schmier yelling out two oldschool anthems ("Total Disaster" and "Bestial Invasion") stand apart from the rest. Viewed chronologically, opener to headliner (although not every band that graced the stage is featured, hence the accompanying studio-only CD), keep the thumb on the remote's skip button.

Testament with Nick Barker (ex-Cradle Of Filth, Dimmu Borgir etc.) on drums, tears through "The Preacher," "New Order," "The Haunting," "Electric Crown" and "D.N.R." but the footage is often too dark and solely focused on Chuck Billy. Overall, the language barrier makes for no real interaction with the large, indoor crowd and there's nothing in the way of interview clips or anything beyond live footage (no photo galleries or band history/discography) as was included on past efforts. Some of the bands get the robot-cam criss-crossing the stage, others don't. Given it's an import, it might be too pricey for what's available.

[metalmind.com.pl] — Mark Gromen



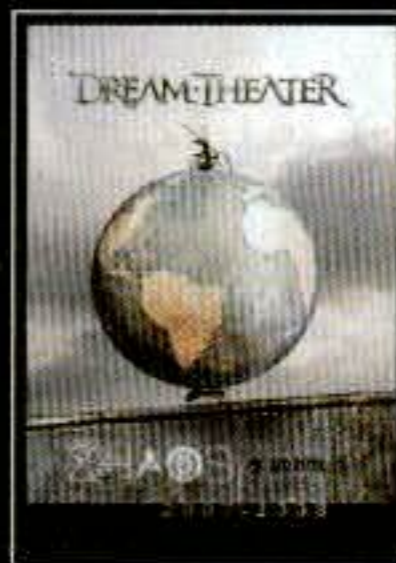
Paul Booth  
*The Art Fusion Experiment*  
Megaforce

Bands have been collaborating on split releases forever, but visual artists? Tattoo artist Paul Booth, along with Filip Leu said, "fuck that," and what they dubbed "Art Fusion" was born. The hour-long feature on this DVD explores the origins of Art Fusion from a collaborative tattoo on some

Mudvayne dude all the way through gallery and museum showings that saw Booth and other artists collaborating on a series of paintings. The basic concept is that Booth and other artists will start with four or five blank canvases, add something to them and rotate every few minutes, creating wholly original works.

While it's awesome to see artists just *going for it* and trying something new, the odor of pretension creeps in every once and a while. Watching the segment in which Paul and his girlfriend travel to Europe to paint with Filip and his wife was like watching people speak and act for the camera. This segment was also edited in a way that suggests the artists were awake for weeks creating this painting, so I kept thinking, "where's the coke/weed?" and, "when are they all just going to fuck?" It felt a little wrong witnessing what seemed like a private, friends-only gathering.

One of the art-critic/talking-head types on this DVD summed up why Art Fusion is interesting, noting that even when looking at incomplete pieces, there was no way to tell who had painted what. In the end, Art Fusion is just a different manifestation of band members creating side-projects to get other ideas out into the world. [darkimages.com] — Dave Hofer



Dream Theater  
*Chaos In Motion*  
Roadrunner

Appropriately titled *Chaos In Motion*, Dream Theater's two-DVD set (also released separately as a three-disc CD) brings us an impressive compilation of moments from their world tour of the same name. Disc One comprises the live portion of the set and finds the band on top of their

proverbial game. Though the song selection concentrates predominantly on 2007's *Systematic Chaos*, some lesser-known tracks off earlier records are included for good measure and Jordan Rudess' keyboard solo is an inarguable DVD highlight. This man is the shining star of the band, and seems to be one of the most down to earth guys in the business.

Disc Two features a behind-the-scenes look at the *Chaos In Motion* tour titled "Behind The Chaos On The Road" and reveals the massive crew and production required of a Dream Theater event which, in its own right, is amazing. Also included are promo videos for "Constant Motion," "Forsaken," and "The Dark Eternal Night" (in studio) and live screen projection films ("The Dark Eternal Night [N.A.D.S.]," "The Ministry Of Lost Souls" and "In The Presence Of Enemies Pt. 2") as well as the obligatory photo gallery and more. There's a ton of extras on here to make it a worthy addition to your Dream Theater video collection. Über fans will want to check out the deluxe collector's edition which includes the DVD double disc and three live DVDs (otherwise sold separately). Sweet.

[dreamtheater.net] — Scott McCooe

