



<http://www.nofrontteeth.co.uk/>

RAT SKATES – ‘BORN IN THE BASEMENT’ DVD

Rat Skates truly fuckin rules. Most famous for being the drummer in pioneering thrash band Overkill, this documentary supersedes the thrash metal genre, this NEEDS to be viewed by everyone in a band in any genre...this is true DIY and proves that through hard work (a hell of a lot of hard work) and ruthless dedication huge goals can be achieved. As Rat himself puts it 'Failure was not an option' and everything was achieved through 'Hard work and tunnel vision' and this was the mind-set he was in from a very young age.

Rat's musical journey started in the late '70's on the vibrant New York punk scene in his first band The Lubricants, young, totally wild and raw playing Max's Kansas City and CBGB's with a pure DIY attitude. As they band got better at their instruments they verged more towards metal and more sophisticated compositions after being influenced by the New Wave of British metal. They went through some member changes and renamed themselves Virgin Killer which soon changed to Overkill. They chose to go down the KISS route of metal and merged that with their punk roots, so this was the defining point where the punks turned metal. You know, people often talk about Guns N' Roses being a phenomenon in the mid-late '80's appealing simultaneously to punks and metallers but Overkill were the first to do that a good half a decade earlier. These were true punks.

From day one the band, and especially Rat did everything himself – from designing the classic Overkill logo (taking elements of the Iron Maiden logo and the Dog Town cross emblem and merging them), to making stickers, badges, screen-printing t-shirts, home-dubbing cassettes, printing posters, running their own merch mailorder, printing the Overkill logo on guitar picks and drum-sticks, making huge set pieces...he was unstoppable and really focussed on pushing Overkill with all his heart. This was unrepressed organization and some really impressive discipline and dedication and many times through this movie, Rat calls Overkill his family – and not just the band, but everyone that goes with it- family members, girlfriends and roadies too.

By 1985 Overkill's local following had exploded and they signed to Megaforce Records which is the point where Rat was no longer in complete control of everything- shirts were screened professionally, vinyl was duplicated professionally etc. and this clearly had an impact on this unstoppable workaholic. After years of insane hard work Rat left the band in 1987 after making no money at all. His dream had come true, he had done everything and more than he set out to do but way beyond burned out. This is a truly inspiring documentary and Rat recounts with inescapable passion- especially for the early, super-DIY days and it's great to hear. His excitement still to this day is undeniable. There are some killer extras on here too including an interview with founding guitar player Riff Thunder, a television broadcast from 1984, a home-made documentary from 1986 and loads more – over an hours worth in total. This is a fantastic documentary that honestly should be used as a teaching tool.

- MARCO