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As perfectly cynical as the music industry prefers to present itself in the public eye, no one can deny that the holidays have a lot to do with giftgiving, and no kid is happier than when he or she is tearing through the paper on a brand new toy. Parents like giving toys for that reason but, deep down, they really wish that they could be unwrapping a toy too; it just seldom happens because being an adult is supposed to mean acting responsibly and not playing with toys. We at Ground Control dispute that thinking, and clearly Aggronautix must as well; since first appearing three years ago, the company has been manufacturing Throbblehead action figures of some of the greatest rock stars in history for the discerning grownup who also happens to like his rock n' roll with a shot of vintage *Creem* spirit in it.

That sounds neat right? *Ground Control* thought so, but wondered if these action figures ("They're not dolls dammit!") were actually any good and wanted to see if they were worth a kid seeking them out as a gift idea for their Dads and Moms, so we got the fine folks at Aggronautix to send us a couple in order to see if they were worth the asking price [\$19.95 USD per unit –ed] and have a bit of fun too. Those wonderful folks sent us three Throbbleheads for us to test drive, and here's what we found out about them.



### Keith Morris

As interesting an idea as these throbbleheads are, Aggronautix couldn't very well expect to make a line of toys immortalizing figures in punk rock without including at least one which challenged the idea of the toys and not have it function like all the rest. The first one to embody that idea is Aggronautix' take on Circle Jerks/OFF! singer Keith Morris. Rather than nodding or disagreeing with everyone or everything like every other good bobblehead toy, the head of this Morris figure remains fixed and the doll's arm – with an accusing index finger extended – shakes at those who touch it.

Some would say that the shaking arm of the Morris doll is a clever way to get the singer's likeness involved [*sculpted to look like Morris did during his days with The Circle Jerks, the fixed cranium made it possible to keep the singer's incredibly long dreadlocks from looking really cheesy in the design –ed*] and, to its credit, the non-Throbblehead does its subject's likeness justice – but the problem with this figurine isn't with the sculpting, it's with the action. First, the spring on *Ground Control's* review copy was incredibly tight and made the arm function more like a spring door stop than anything – when manipulated, it more vibrated and shook spastically than swung easily. Not only that, but the spring was completely visible in the shoulder, sort of ruining the illusion of "likeness" that these figures reach for.

Such a description may sound like a damning dismissal of this toy, but it really isn't meant to be. To the Keith Morris' Throbblehead's credit, the sculpting done on the face looks excellent, the detail put into the hair shows that time was clearly taken to make it look lifelike and the pose (down on one knee and appearing ready to spring at those who see it) that the figure is cast in looks great. Really, everything about this figure is excellent except for the construction and action of the arm – so it's just sort of unfortunate that the action is really what the toy is being marketed for. If Aggronautix can figure out a way to make the arm work a little more naturally they'll have a winner, or if the company takes the design back to the drawing board, fixes the arm and just makes this throbblehead a Keith Morris statue (as they've done with Wendy O. Williams earlier this year), Aggronautix will have something to be proud of. As it stands though, while this likeness of Keith Morris looks cool, it doesn't work very well.