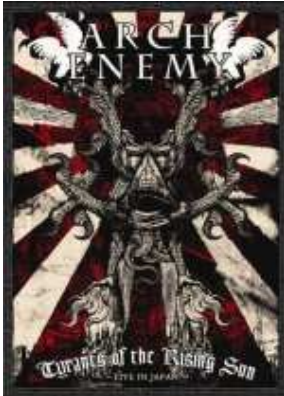


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Arch Enemy - Tyrants Of The Rising Sun: Live In Japan DVD (Century Media) By: Joe Florez



It was just a mere two years ago that AE dished out a live double disc. Now, they are back with a new DVD except it's from Japan which is probably where they feel most comfortable. One thing can be said about the fans from the land of the rising sun and that is they love good music and appreciate it. And boy does it show live on tape. The concert hall is filled to the rafters with rabid fans and just when drummer Daniel shows up on stage, the place erupts. When the intro with sirens go off and band blasts off into "Blood On My Hands", forget about it. The place simply explodes. The small framed Angela Gossow looks so innocent and fragile, but when she opens her mouth, it's like a lions roar and she commands the stage with all eyes on her, and the band. She has proven over the years that she can go head to head with the best of them and she is the real deal. The gang fires on all cylinders and what's cool is when the Amott brothers tear shit up during the twin guitar

solos. It's great to have them back together. The Japanese people are so fanatical about this group that they manage to throw in some chants to fill in the gap during the choruses of "Ravenous." One of the more interesting highlights here is Chris's solo. It's not a typical shred fest where he is full of flash. It's rather methodical, melodic and well structured with Danielson and Sharlee providing a nice rhythmic groove. Danielson eventually throws down a complicated solo as well, eventually filled with background nuances and sound effects when he strikes a certain beat. Pretty cool. Main man Michael does a solo too that is much like Chris's and has a full backing band as well. There is one thing that I have never seen the Japanese folks do at a show and that's create a mosh pit. Jesus Christ! When the guys bust out into "Nemesis", the fans go fucking berserk.

The set list is pretty much solid covering all of the essentials along with a handful of new cuts from "Rise Of The Tyrants." Great editing, sound and production makes this another worthy purchase, however I think they are beginning to pump out too much DVD's ala Dream Theater. While not having about 5-6 in their catalogue, keep pumping them out every year or two and they'll be there. You don't want to over saturate the market. DVD's are supposed to be special and come out every 3-5 years. My take on it anyway. Two versions of "Revolution Begins" are on here as well as a video for "I Will Live Again." Also on here is a road documentary with the guys in Japan. You will see Mike visit the ESP shop there where his custom guitar is made. You also visit the famous Burrn Magazine office and crew and more. Mike and the gang show great appreciation for the fans that put them on the map first. A worthy purchase indeed. www.centurymedia.com | www.archenemy.net

Dark Funeral - Attera Orbis Terrarum: Part II DVD (Regain Records) By: Dave Schalek



Dark Funeral release yet another double disc DVD, the second installment of "Attera Orbis Terrarum", on Regain Records. Highly impressed by the reception afforded to them by Latin American fans during the band's 2006 swing through South America, Dark Funeral recorded two full-length concerts with professional production values. The two concerts, filmed in Buenos Aires and Sao Paulo respectively, are accompanied by fan footage clips from all over North and South America from a period ranging from 1997-2007.

The better of the two concerts, each just over an hour, is that filmed in Buenos Aires, even though the set lists are nearly identical. Crystal clear sound, good camera angles with minimal distraction or obstruction, and short clips of the rabid crowd are included. The crowd's enthusiasm is apparent, and the band members do take the time to acknowledge their appreciation of the fans. The second concert in Sao Paulo is on a stage slightly

removed from the fans, has an annoying lighting boom just above the band and, most annoyingly, sometimes consists of two, out of synch, video tracks overlying one another. Annoying, to say the least. The film is somewhat grainier, as well.

Those of you familiar with the first installment of “Attera Orbis Terrarum” will recall the raw footage clips taken from all over Europe over the band’s history. That tradition continues here with clips taken by fans from all over North and South America. Some of the clips are particularly noteworthy, such as the ones from Mexico. The enthusiasm of the Mexican fans is readily apparent in all of those clips, with the crowd nearly losing it as Dark Funeral astride a darkened stage in some rundown theater. In addition, there are a couple of shots from some shows in L.A. I recognize some of the members of the crowd, and I was at one of the shows at the Key Club in West Hollywood. Loads of fun!

Certainly, although there’s really nothing new on Part II beyond what you’ve probably already have seen on Part I, but “Attera Orbis Terrarum- Part II” is another fine installment to Dark Funeral’s body of work.

However, the time is drawing near for Dark Funeral to release some new music.

www.darkfuneral.se | www.regainrecords.com

Lacuna Coil - Visual Karma (Body, Mind And Soul) DVD (**Century Media**) By: Joe Florez



The Italian five piece unit has finally released their official and first live DVD. This release revolves around the Karma Code promotion the two concerts on here are from Wacken 2007 and Loudpark in Japan. While the Wacken show is shot beautifully in broad daylight and contains some really cool widescreen shots, the music doesn’t sound natural. It sounds like the guys went back into the studio and re-dubbed it or something because it sounds too perfect and you don’t hear any of the natural nuances from the outside or fans except during the breaks between songs. While the guys continue to have a strong stage presence and the music is tight for the most part, it has just gotten so Americanized. “Fragments Of

Faith” and “To The Edge” just sound so nu-metal with the down tuned guitars and the extremely low bass licks. Boring! It’s songs like “Heaven’s A Lie” and “Swamped” where they truly shined and showed their originality. It good to see that after all the hard work the band put into their music and shows have paid off because you can see the countless fans at their performances. I remember them when they first came to Chicago and they were playing in dumps. They have come a long way in their ten plus year career. While their music has taken a turn for the worse in my opinion, other fans see otherwise and those who dig them still to this day will enjoy this double DVD package. The second part of the DVD contains material from each of the members of the band and what they like to do when not on the road. It a personal look into their lives. What impressed me is that Cristina is involved in helping Africa in a project that gives them water from a pump. There is also a road documentary that shows the guys heading to Australia and Japan and then there is a fan section where the fans got involved in various contests. Thank God for the skip button. Very mundane material that most people won’t care about. This portion of the DVD is probably the least exciting and could have done without, but let the fans speak for themselves. I believe that it’s been a long time in the coming for the band to release a DVD and it should tie over the Hot Topic fans until something new comes out. God, I just hope it’s better than Karma Code. www.centurymedia.com | www.lacunacoil.it

Lair of the Minotaur - War Metal Battle Master DVD (**Southern Lord**) By: Dave Schalek



Chicago's very own sludge laden, war blackened, death metal beasts Lair of the Minotaur released the absolutely brilliant "War Metal Battle Master" on Southern Lord Records earlier this year (2008). They quickly followed up with a music video for the title track that ended up being banned in who the Hell knows how many countries and with good reason. That video, along with other oodles of extras, are packaged in a new DVD from Southern Lord.

Naturally, the unedited video is the primary feature, and is presented in full. Filmed out somewhere in the eastern deserts of Southern California, the video depicts the band in front of some old Spanish Mission ruins (looks like it, anyway) while Ancient Greek warriors/ gladiators battle it out in hand to hand combat. Drawing from Ancient Greek myth, the fallen warriors are dragged off by naked, busty nymphs where they are

promptly butchered and eaten.

The reasons for the censorship given this video are obvious with lopped off limbs and heads, buckets of entrails and gore, and the naked actresses tearing into the fallen warriors' flesh with obvious relish and gusto. The influences present here are obvious as well, with Italian splatter flicks and movies such as "Cannibal Holocaust" providing the inspiration. As entertaining as the video happens to be, the fighting scenes are actually a little sloppy as it is obvious that the actors are not using their weaponry with great force as they deliver blows. This strikes me as rather amateurish, but, strangely enough, the fighting sequences actually look better with tighter editing in the censored version of the video, also included in this DVD release. Also included on the DVD are a few production featurettes about the video, as well as plenty of clips of the band performing in small clubs scattered throughout North America and Europe. The quality of the recordings of the concert footage varies greatly, but all manage to capture the raw intensity of Lair of the Minotaur in a live setting.

Overall, the "War Metal Battle Master" DVD is recommended and a number of vendors are offering the DVD for a low price. www.lairoftheminotaur.com | www.southernlord.com

Malevolent Creation - Lost Commandments DVD (Arctic Music Group/ MVD Entertainment Group)

By: Dave Schalek



Long time running death metal stalwarts Malevolent Creation finally release a DVD, entitled "Lost Commandments", on their personal label Arctic Music Group. A bare bones DVD if there ever was one, "Lost Commandments" just consists of two full-length concerts, the first filmed at the Party San festival in Germany in 2007, and the second filmed at Locomotion in Paris in 2004.

The first concert at Party San is, by far, the better of the two shows with a headlining set at the festival with Brett Hoffman on vocals and Dave Culross on drums.

Unfortunately, the concert is filmed with only one camera located at the mixing board that jumps around a bit, and the sound recording could have been better.

However, Malevolent Creation deliver the goods with an energetic set that is appreciated by the crowd after having to stand around all day in a rainstorm. An extra is briefly included, consisting of someone walking around the festival with a camcorder and catching a few snippets of the crowd throughout

the day as well as a clip or two of some of the other performing bands, most notably Melechesh.

The second concert is from a small Parisian club in 2004 and features Kyle Symons on vocals, one of his last performances with the band. Although interesting for that reason, the sound is horrible and the show is filmed with one camera, once again located at the mixing board, which basically consists of one shot of the entire stage. There are no other features included in this release.

Fans of Malevolent Creation will probably want to add "Lost Commandments" to their collection, but, compared to some of the very high quality DVDs that have come from various metal bands, Malevolent Creation still have a long way to go. www.arcticmusicgroup.com | <http://mvdb2b.com> | www.myspace.com/malevolentcreation

Nevermore - The Year Of The Voyager DVD (Century Media) By: Joe Florez



Finally, the disc that all the Nevermore fans have been waiting for has arrived. I can remember asking the band every time I saw them when was the disc going to go into production and even they had no clue and this goes back about 3 years. Now, onto the product. I am shocked that this is a two hour plus concert. I was expecting shorter, but better for us, right?

There are 21 songs on here recorded from Bochum, Germany in 2006. After the intro which contains footage of the show going into production before the big night, the guys kick off with "Final Product" from their last release This Godless Endeavor. Performing in

a small club, but packed with rabid fans the Seattle boys fire on all cylinders with nothing less than spot on musicianship. Joining them on stage as a second guitarist is the now former member of the band and new recruit for Megadeth and Ex Jag Panzer six stringer Chris Broderick. You know, the word is out there that Jeff Loomis is a phenomenal guitarist and if you don't believe us just watch this disc. He is a true mindblower. Van Williams is a beast behind his skins. He pounds them away with such ferocity, but at the same time he is technical and proficient. He too is a sight to behold. Chris and Jim Sheppard are no slouches either. And as for Warrel's voice... He is an entity all his own. No one has a voice like his and never will. The way he is able to combine his highs and lows.

For their first DVD, the guys went balls out by throwing something from each record into their live set. The classics are all here like "Enemies Of Reality", "What Tomorrow Knows", "Next In Line" and countless others. The production on here is superb, the directing is nice, but as far as the editing goes? It's ok, but too MTVish because it's a ton of quick edits which I have never liked. I would like to see longer footage of Van and Jeff, but that's only my minor complaint about this disc. You can see the fans enjoying themselves as they sing along to the tunes, chant and mosh. Disc two contains such goodies as there are more concert clips from Gigantour, Metal Mania Festival, Wacken and the Century Media 10th Anniversary party. Also on here is every video up to date and then a nice intie with Warrel himself. Just listen to him explain how the labels wanted him to perform while he was sick as a dog. Very interesting. Bottom line, this double DVD was well worth the wait and all metal heads should embrace this product. BUY! www.centurymedia.com | www.nevermore.tv

Turisas - A Finnish Tour With Turisas DVD (Century Media) By: Joe Florez



It's kind of hard to believe, but only after some demos, E.P.'s and two full lengths these melodic Viking/battle metallers have compiled enough footage to offer a DVD. This is not a full length concert from one particular show. It's just a bunch of outdoor festivals crammed into one disc. For 80 minutes, you will see these lovable Finns decked out in war paint and animal fur and armed with their weapons as they bring their music to you from various locations. One minute you will see them performing "As Torches Rise" at a major event and then you see them in the forest the next hamming out their vicious tune "To Holmgard And Beyond" along with an accordion and a fiddler all on their home turf.

Turisas display tremendous amounts of energy on stage which goes well past ten. Their music is easy on their ears. The guitars are packed with muscle behind them as they riff away. The rhythm section is phenomenal as the guys throw down beats that are catchy and will definitely keep you on your toes. In fact, you get the urge to do a Finnish jig, but instead the fans mosh and it's quite amusing. The fans that are at each of these shows are so enthused about the band and music that they are constantly participating by chanting, singing along and doing whatever else to enhance the experience. While the music does begin to wane after a while and sound the same, it's still fun, but preferred in small doses. One thing is for sure, the fans are out there in droves supporting their band. There's a funny video for "Rasputin" and a blooper reel along with a documentary. The docu is actually the best part of the disc as it's not just filled with random garbage. Instead, we have a narrator who is professional and guides us along the tale of how Turisas formed and their journey of touring across Finland. What's more is that there is plenty of astonishing scenery and you get a

history of Finland itself which is quite educational. If you think that bands like Unleashed or Enslaved are too heavy for some of you, then this may be the ticket for those that are power metal heads or the ilk that basically like your music with mid-high tempos and plenty of melody. If this is your thing, then indulge and enjoy. www.centurymedia.com | www.turisas.com