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## New Record Reviews **Fest 10th anniversary: Fests 7-9 remembered**

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**Nekrasov**  
The Ever-Present



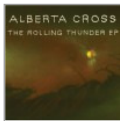
**Light Bearer**  
Lapsus

We could find alumni to talk up Fest all they want, but that point of view relies on a sense of familiarity with the city of Gainesville, the layout of the venues, and the local restaurants and hotels.

Consider it a bonus feature, but we've also gotten our hands on the DVD documentary *Fested 7*. Here, we offer the perspective of a fan who has yet to make the Gainesville pilgrimage.



**Seed From The Geisha**  
Talk Peace to the Wolf



**Alberta Cross**  
The Rolling Thunder



**Get Rad**  
Choose Your Own Adventure



**You, Me, & Everyone We Know**  
Things Are Really Weird Right Now



**A Death Cinematic**  
Your Fate Twisting, Epic In Its Crushing Moments



**Puscifer**  
Conditions of My Parole



*Fested: A Journey to Fest 7* – Directed by Reese Lester  
Blue Elephant Media, 2011

I've been wanting to attend The Fest for years now, but I haven't managed to make it out there. Just about any band I can think of that I'd want to see perform plays The Fest nearly every year, with Fest 10 having shaped up to be the best line-up yet. Lets step back to Fest 7 though. Director Reese Lester set out for The Fest's seventh annual blowout with Spanish Gamble (known then as "Dirty Money") back in 2008 and documented it, with some live footage contributed by National Underground. *Fested* is less of a "journey to Fest 7," and more of a stumble through it.

Ultimately there are two different elements to this documentary. There's the the interviews with random people or bands and candid moments. Then there are live performances. We'll talk about the live footage later. First lets touch on the documentation. Going in, I didn't exactly get what I was expecting and that's my fault. I guess I expected there to be more narrative, but most of the off moments are people getting drunk or already drunk. At times it comes off more as a compilation of YouTube videos than a documentary. *Fested* gains more focus when the bands are interviewed. You get their perception of The Fest, what they love about

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it, and hearing their stories about past Fests. From the fans' perspective, it gets more of The Fest experience across with things like "Tent City," where a group of attendants set up tents and camp out rather than pay the price for hotel rooms. It's the kind of thing I was hoping to hear more about and what makes the weekend festival more appealing and fun to me.

The other main focus of the documentary are the bands and their performances. We're not talking about just the primary shows in established venues, but the warehouse and parking lot shows. Most of the recordings look great and feature live footage from Paint It Black, The Lawrence Arms, Dirty Money, The Flatliners, and many more. The sound isn't always great though. Sometimes it sounds too muffled, but it's watching the crowd of sweaty people singing and dancing their hearts out that makes all the footage worth watching. Like Paint it Black's show in a parking lot playing out of their U-Haul. All you can hear are the crowd and the drums until the cops come in and break up the show. That doesn't stop the crowd as they all begin to chant the closing lyrics to the band's track, "Memorial Day" though. Then there's the packed warehouse with OK Pilot, New Mexican Disaster Squad, None More Black, and The Flatliners. They give you this yearning to be apart of it. Like you belong there and nowhere else.

*Fested: A Journey to Fest 7*, is far from a perfect documentary, but it's at the very least entertaining. It's definitely worth watching for the shows alone. If you feel like watching people get drunk or act foolish, then this is right up your alley. If you get the DVD, you get some extras like a drinking game to play as you watch, a "Stagedives of Fest 7" little featurette, and subtitles so you can sing-along if you don't know the songs already. I'm sure for people who went to Fest 7, this would be perfect to jog their memory and talk about the great time they had. For others who have never been to the festival, it's probably a decent representation of what they'd expect it to be like.

7 out of 10

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Posted on Tuesday 25th October 2011

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