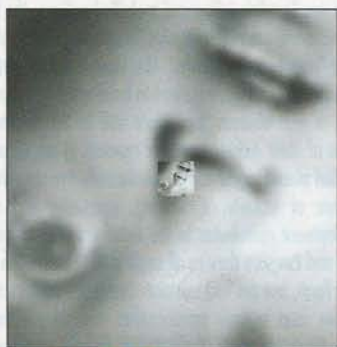


AURAL ASSAULTS

continued



Infidel?/Castro! Bioentropic Damage Fractal Crucial Blast

The world of ambient noise can be a fascinating one. It puzzles many, and delights the fanatics. Infidel?/Castro! certainly seem to have a hold on whatever sort of electro-gear they're using, and the results can be both hit or miss. Once these guys lock into a sonic vibe, it can be rather mesmerizing. However, when they *don't*, it's like schizophrenia gone wild. Unfortunately, most of this double-disc madness features the latter, but each disc ends with the key track, which sends one's mind into the outer vortex of space.

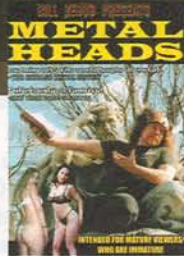
Most of the album seems thrown together rather than strategically placed, as if frantically changing the radio dial and finding nothing but random chapters of sound with no relation to one another. You can expect lots of feedback, distortion, bleeps, bleeps and every sort of quirky noise in between, and it can be interesting to see what this duo come up with. I think they accomplish what they set out to do here, which is create a complete whirlwind of aural destruction via electronics, samples and traditional rock instruments (drums, guitars et al).

"(In)voluntary Emotional Response" starts with what sounds like strummed acoustic chords and gradually morphs into waves of distorted electronic synths that'll be sure to lift you into the clouds and let you momentarily forget your daily life. "Temporarily Dissolving Into Plasma During A Moment To One's Self" is also quite the mind numbing experience with the minimalistic touches of Sigur Ros and their own harsh layers of electro bliss. If the band concentrated more on these ideas, rather than being the schizophrenic bastards that they seem to prefer, I think they'd take it home. Let's see what's next. [www.infidel-castro.com] — Scott McCoe

DVD REVIEW

Bill Zebub Presents: Metalheads Music Video Distributors

How does one approach reviewing this? Knowing that *Metalheads* is an entirely independent venture slung together by Bill Zebub, creator of *The Grimoire Of Exalted Deeds* and staunch defender of all things politically correct (okay, maybe not), uses Jersey metal folks as cast in lieu of anyone with actual acting ability and warns you it is "intended for mature viewers who are immature" doesn't exactly cultivate much hope that this will be on par with Tarrantino. In fact, the blow you'll feel as a result of the uneven sound, lack of plot and continuity, poor dialogue and story that barely makes sense will be cushioned if you just approach this with a certain lack of expectation. Then again, how far does one let the creator slide before you start with the "90-or-so minutes of my life I'll never get back" mantra? The back-of-the-box blurb purports this as a glimpse into the metal lifestyle, which may be true in some instances, but if you don't have a sense of humor and get really riled about metal stereotypes, you might want to forget this even exists. The rest of you can follow Zebub and his charges through scene after non-sequitur as they do drugs, drink excessively, fight like penned roosters, fuck badly, watch softcore porn and do more drugs (all simulated, by the way) while attempting to get rich quick, only to have their best bet at getting rich go up in a haze of hooligan smoke. The comedy is rooted in metal — well, *duh* — with plenty of wink-wink-nudge-nudge references and a few laugh-out-loud moments (the Nazi-cop, statutory rape and house party scenes), but it's low-low-brow with far too many should've-been-laugh-out-loud moments suffering from hacksaw editing. In the end, the "highlights" end up being the metal chicks parading around in their unmentionables. [www.thegrimoire.com] — Kevin Stewart-Panko



Whore Doing It For The Kids Moribund

I can't personally account for how many hours some of the band members in Whore may have spent locked up in a closet full of used dildos and filthy sheets. Though I'm sure they're normal individuals with their shit fairly together upstairs, one listen to *Doing It For The Kids* might have you thinking otherwise. So what is it they're doing what for the kids, exactly? They're coaching them on how to deliver the "Dirty Sanchez" and fieldstrip and handle assault weapons. Welcome to the delicate art of gore-grind, friends.

Whore keep the inexhaustible gore-grind market well supplied with garbled chug 'n' groove speed riffing, hyperblast drumming and gut splattering gore-porn content. Featuring members of Nightmare and Fornicator as well as some stand-ins from the members of Lord Gore members, *Doing It For The Kids* pummels, appalls and shoves a meat-smeared hacksaw up the rectal passage of the world of the politically correct with a 22-track/47-minute homicidally-hilarious graverobbing escapade, for the kids (the kids who dig Meat Shits, Pungent Stench and that Razorback Records stuff).

With Lord Gore/Maniac Killer's Neil Smith manning the soundboard, *Doing It For The Kids* surely tops their previous Moribund hammer-fest (*Unfinished Business*) with more homicidal veracity and tried-and-true delivery. In addition, *DIFTK* features some of the harshest, most outrageous samples leading me to believe I now have a good lead if I ever need a snuff film. [www.moribundcult.com] — Dave "pass me that cleaver" Brenner

Biomechanical The Empires Of The Worlds Earache

Biomechanical wield their axes like Metallica circa 1985, howl like Sir Rob Halford in 1979 and summon the power and groove of *Vulgar Display Of Power*-era Pantera...not that channeling bands like Metallica, Priest and Pantera is anything new in the metal world. Biomechanical are just unapologetically blatant about it, and to say the band wear their influences on their sleeve would be like saying the terrorists "messed up" the World Trade Center. Opening track "Enemy Within" features Halfordian wailing, Tipton/Downing licking, Dimebag grooves and breathy-talky Anselmo sing/speak parts. The remaining songs that follow subscribe to this formula, as well. *The Empires Of The Worlds* is somewhat of a mess, although many metal fans will dig this, if only for the band's emulation of their inspirations. [www.biomechanical.co.uk] — Amy Sclarretto

Grey The First Shade Of... Avantgarde

Usually I can expect greatness from Avantgarde Music, the label that's blessed us with countless releases over many years of some truly classic and timeless artists such as Kvist, Katatonia, Pan.Thy.Monium, Cultus Sanguine, Solefald etc. The label describes Grey as "almost improvised," which immediately makes me think of Abruptum. Thankfully, I hear no Abruptum in the work of Grey, and yet, I also hear no improvisation. I'm confused.

What I do hear is a one-man black metal band that sounds very similar to every other one-man black metal band you've ever heard, save Burzum. Vocals with so much reverb on them, you can hear it dripping off each syllable, plodding riffs that are as unique as a Cradle Of Filth T-shirt on an Ozzfest attendee and production that has that very distinct and recognizable stench of being recorded in Mom and Dad's basement. How unholy.

Seriously though, it's not all *that* bad. And I guess someone who was into the multitude of American bedroom black metal bands would really enjoy Grey. However I have a hard time caring about this release, but then again I can't stand most of the under-cooked black metal that's coming out of the woodwork these days.

So, if Xasthur or Judas Iscariot is your thing, check out Grey. If you couldn't believe how cool Twilight was, check out Grey. Everyone else can probably steer clear of this release and survive just fine. [www.avantgardemusic.com] — JWW