

music DVDs

MURDER CITY DEVILS 7

THE END: FINAL SHOW
HALLOWEEN 2001

MUSIC VIDEO DISTRIBUTORS

Rum to whiskey is fuckin' right!



My life as an alcoholic Seattle hipster shithead began just as the Murder City Devils ended—talk about your gateway drugs. I attended this finale at the lovely 1,000 capacity Showbox as an introverted, uncostumed quasi-sXer, but it didn't take long to grasp (and embrace) the core vices that Spencer Moody was hoarsely braying about: namely fucking, boozing, and self-destructive paranoia. Unfortunately, I never really bought into the Devils' whole switchblade 'n skulls gang vibe—I was already a Rocket from the Crypt psycho, and you only need one band like that in your life—so the songs all kinda congealed into one big, swaggering bar chord blur. I much prefer Moody, guitarist Nate

Manny, and drummer Coady Willis' more deranged, less populist turn in Deadlowtide.

MCD loonies will appreciate the extras here, though, including four babyface "bootleg" performances from way back in the day, a witty feature length commentary from Moody, and the obligatory photo album. As for the hopelessly incoherent, shitfaced final set, it shouldn't and couldn't have gone down any other way. Highlights: Willis—now pummeling for sludge duo Big Business—lights his skins ablaze, and future *Pretty Girls Make Graves*-diggers Andrea Zollo and Nick DeWitt make major cameos. He handles carnival keys for the A.W.O.L. Leslie Hardy and she does backups on "Boom Swagger." It should be noted, *Heathers* fans, that Zollo sports a homemade Big Fun shirt, and Moody reveals in his commentary that "Bear Away" was the Devils' "Teenage Suicide: Don't Do It." We love our dead (not necessarily) gay sons!

—ANDREW BONAZELLI



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Iced Earth:
Avoid re-enactors
at all costs



ICED EARTH 3

GETTYSBURG (1863)

STEAMHAMMER/SPV

What we have here is... failure to communicate

As with most Jon Schaffer projects, *Gettysburg (1863)*—a cross-platform tie-in to last year's Iced Earth full-length *The Glorious Burden*—begs for simple economy. Schaffer's as straightforward a songwriter as they come within the proletarian genre of power metal, but he just can't resist the urge to unpack, over-explain, and defend his every impulse. This leads to an endless parade of double-disc sets, literary allusions, hardly-there string sections, and in this case, handcuffing some otherwise entertaining ballads to a series of unnecessary images when the music tells you everything you need to know about the Jon Schaffer ethos.

Too bad *Gettysburg (1863)* does little to dispel his reputation as a self-involved douchebag. Aside from a numbingly repetitive Power Point presentation set to the epic song cycle from the tail-end of *The Glorious Burden* and an exploitative video for the 9/11-themed "When the Eagles Cry," barely anything on this two-DVD set relates to, uh, music. What you get with this bait-and-switch is a 20-minute advertisement for Schaffer's military collectibles store in his home state of Indiana, an hour or so of an interviewer lobbing softballs at him during a chat session in his garishly-decorated living room, and what amounts to a giant Robert E. Lee screensaver. If you act now, you'll also get an attenuated tour of the Gettysburg battlefield conducted by Schaffer and some guy named Ted, both of whom pause repeatedly to prompt the viewer to "think about it." Just like that ABC Afterschool Special where Rob Lowe impregnates Dana Plato, but way more didactic and with a greater emphasis on adolescent male power fantasies. Think about it—and put it down. —NICK GREEN