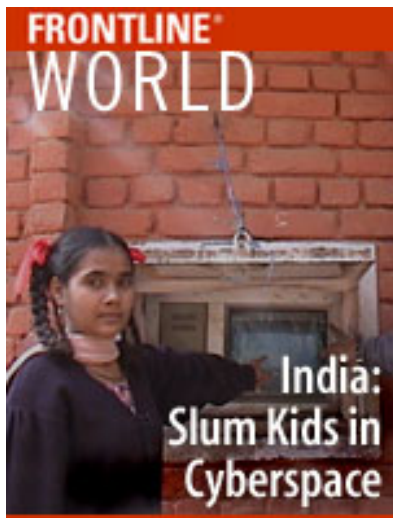


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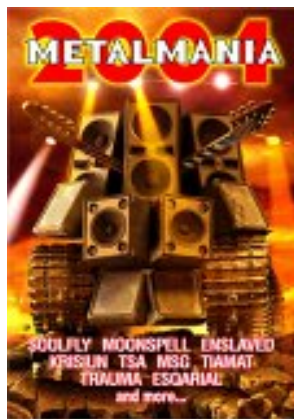
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REVIEW

DVD/CD Review: Metalmania 2004

Posted by [Chris Beaumont](#) on June 22, 2005 07:28 AM (See [all posts by Chris Beaumont](#))

Filed under: [Video](#), [Music: Hard Rock](#), [Music: Live Concerts](#), [Music: Metal](#), [Review](#), [Video: Music](#) - [Scroll down to read comments on this story](#) and/or [add one of your own.](#)



[Metalmania 2004](#)

DVD from *Music Video Distribu*
Release date: 21 June, 2005

I'd didn't know what Metalmania was until I got my hands on this disk, which I grabbed because of the appearances of Tiamat, Moonspell, and Soulfly. What I learned was that Metalmania is a festival celebrating metal, mostly of the extreme variety, that takes place in Poland each year. It has been a yearly occurrence since 1986. They play host to a number of metal bands from Europe and around the world. It has varied in size, occasionally spanning a few days, other times just one, and

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even others filling two stages with metallic insanity.

This is a set which features a DVD running nearly two hours focusing on the nine main stage acts. Plus, there is a CD featuring the thirteen second stage acts. It is a great way to be introduced to metal acts that you may or may not be familiar with all in the same place. The set also shows that Europe has a thriving extreme metal scene with a lot of respect for the older metal styles of the 70's and 80's which has been left behind in the US, at least at a large scale.

First, I'd like to take a look at the main stage acts on the DVD, which is the real substance of this set. It features 23 songs split between the 9 bands. I will also give a star rating for each act, for what they are worth.

The first band was Trauma, and we are served 3 doses of their style of heavy. Each song gets successively better, and they have some good riffs, but in the end I found it rather unremarkable. their stage presence was not all that imposing, as they just stood there. Not a bad way to open up the show. **

Next up is a band called Esqarial featuring Grzegorz Kupczyk (don't ask how to pronounce either, please!). This was a step up in the technical department, featuring a nice Mozart inspired opening, and some Iron Maiden inspired sound. The vocals were decent, but were a little sporadic over the three songs presented here. This is an act I would be interested in hearing

"Then hearing all the taunts about how he's the on... [\[more\]](#)

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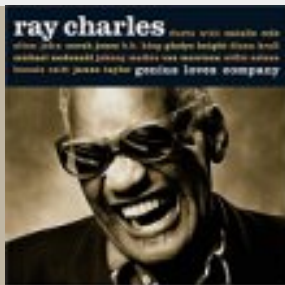
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some studio work from. ***

The next two songs are brought to us by Krisiun. These guys are fast! Through that speed they produce are really evil sound. I had heard of this act before, but have never heard them prior to this display.

***.5

Enslaved took the stage and proceeded to deliver three songs of dark atmospheric despair. They are heavy, slow, and grinding. Their style seemed to lean towards the dramatic darkness, and they do a good job of it. ***

Now it was time to change things up a little bit. The next act was MSG, the Michael Schenker Group. I have heard Schenker over the years, never enough to really say I was a fan, or that I was even familiar with his work, but having spent time with UFO and The Scorpions, as well as his own group, it would be hard for a rock and metal fan to avoid coming into some contact. Here, they proceed to deliver some metal with an old school flavor. In addition to some rocking metal, there were a couple of great solos. First there is the solid Schenker, and then his bass player and drummer trade some segments. Excellent performance. ***.5

Now I was a little disappointed with our next act, Tiamat. It has nothing to do with their performance, which was great, it was that they are a bit underrepresented here with only one song. The performance is great, I have a pair of their albums from the late 90's that are great.

[Don't have a cow, ... \[more\]](#)

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I agree, FX is putting out some really quality dra...
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(We) then have the robotic Commander Data wiggling ...
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The new disc sounds like adore? yes if adore was r...
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great satirical piece, will!
[\[more\]](#)

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gypseyman writes: "It is

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This performance makes me want to go get others. It features Fernando Ribeiro of Moonspell sharing the vocal duties. These guys play by their own rules delivering an original gothic styled metal. I knock off a star here for just one song. ***

After Tiamat, it was time to take another step back and get some old school metal. TSA was the next act, I have never heard of them before, but they have played an important role in Polish metal for the past 20+ years. Their performance was good, it seemed a bit off, but it was easy to forgive as they seemed to be having a great time up there. ***

Moonspell was next on the list. Like Tiamat, I have a few of their albums from the late 90's which I am rather fond of. Here they give us three tracks of dark leaning metal. Not as extreme as some of the early acts, nor as goth as Tiamat, they forge their own direction in original metal, and the performance here reinforces that. They tear through with high energy and talent. ***.5

The main event of the festival is Soulfly, headed by Max Cavalera who was a founding member of metal greats Sepultura, and has been forging ahead in new directions for four albums of Soulfly. They deliver a couple of great songs. Not metal in the traditional sense, but definitely metal in attitude. He has gathered a good lineup of musicians to back him up on stage, and It would have been great to see more of their performance. ***.5

better to have good and b...
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Something else important to the show is the crowd reaction. The crowd is lively and vocal throughout showing their support for each and every band. Something I did notice was they were engaged in the traditional head banging and jumping, rather than the more violent reactions of American crowds. I found it refreshing.

That wraps up the bands and crowd, but this disk is more than just a collection of bands. How does it sound? How does it look? How are the production values? The answer on all counts are pretty good. It won't win any A/V awards, but they serve the material fine.

Something that is crucial in a performance based concert DVD is editing. The editing here is very good. I have seen some disks take the path of cutting too fast, never giving the viewer a chance to really see anything. That is not the case here. The timing of the cuts works very well, never distracting, giving each band member their due, good work to those involved. I also like how there is no break in the sound when switching bands, it plays straight through.

The video is good, good color separation, no noticeable edge enhancement. It does a good job of representing the show.

The audio is also good, presented in both Dolby Digital 5.1 and 2.0. I watched with the 5.1 track, it is much richer in tone.

There are even some extras here.

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There is a history of the Metalmania festival listing the bills for all of the previous events. There is a photo gallery of the show, and some desktop images for your computer. There is also a section with full biographical information on all of the involved bands. As an extra not listed on the box, there are brief video interviews with all of the main stage acts, asking them about what they are expecting from the show and the creation of their recent albums. The interviews are brief, but surprisingly informative, my only gripe is that it takes a bit of navigation to get to them, I would have liked to be able to view them all in a row.

As an even better extra there is a 13 track audio CD of the second stage acts. I thought it would be live performances, but even better we get studio tracks. Granted, it is a mixed bag as to what is good on the album, but there are definitely some good acts on it. High points include Bright Ophidia, Atrophia Red Sun, Tenebrosus, and The Chainsaw, all acts to keep an eye on.

Bottomline. This is a good set for any fan of metal. It may introduce you to some new acts, or be reintroduced to old favorites. Either way, you will get 2 quality hours of live material and another hour of music on CD.

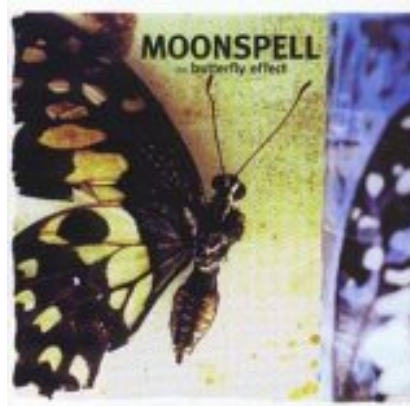
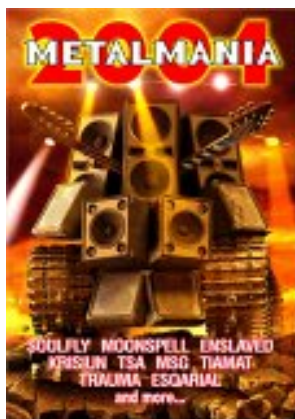
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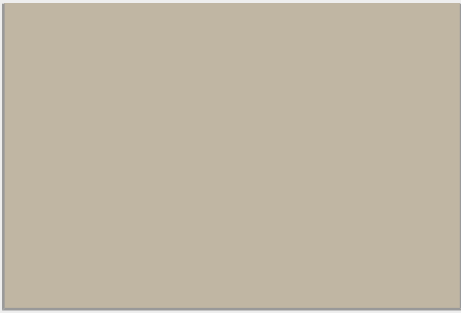
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