

DVDCult GUITAR HEROES

METALMANIA 2004

(2005) Music Video

Distributors

160 Minutes \$24.99

Region 1

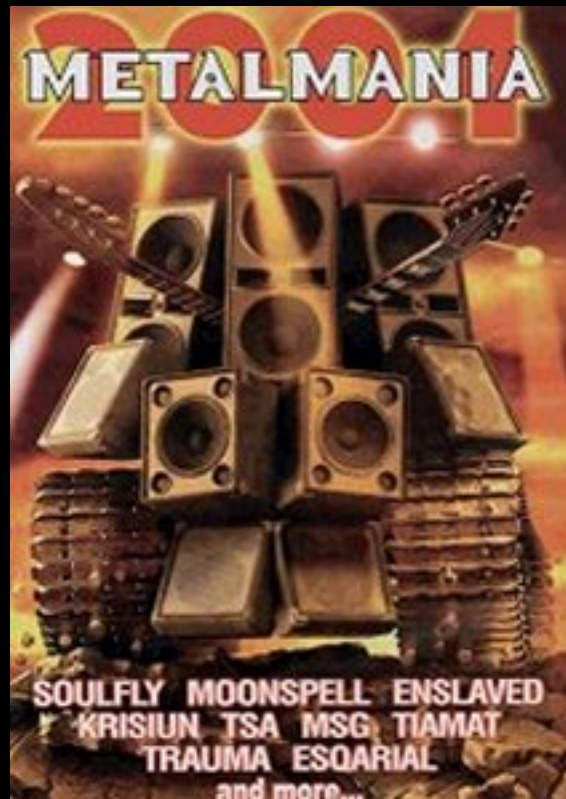
Video: Full Frame (1.33.1)

Audio: Dolby Digital 2.0
and 5.1

Subtitles: None

Packaging: Keepcase

Chapter Stops: 23



Poland's Metal Mind Productions and Music Video Distributors have joined forces to bring one of Europe's premiere heavy music festivals to DVD for a North American audience. This event, held in Poland each year since 1985, is called METALMANIA and hosts some of the world's finest young metal talents combined with veteran acts. Like many European festivals, these shows have become a melting pot of various hard music styles including Gothic, Punk, Progressive, Power, Black & Death metal (with this year in particular focusing on those last two genres). I'll tell you what—every year in the U.S. we get the same old Ozzfest with the same old roster of bands (how many times can we possibly sit thru BLACK LABEL SOCIETY, SLIPNOT, and other alternative dreck), while Europe is home to some of the most mind-blowing musical festivals ever imagined (such as WACKEN, AARDSHOCK, DONNINGTON etc.). Little attention is paid by promoters or the press here, but that is beginning to change with the emergence of what I have coined, 'the Festival Disc'. What constitutes a Festival Disc you ask? Basically, these all-day music festivals ranging from 6 to 12 hours are condensed and re-edited to showcase the best songs and performances of each band in the event. The end result is a DVD that gives the viewer and taste of what these bands and festivals

are all about. These Festival Discs are beginning to become common place in Europe, but Metal Mind Productions has released the first such title for North America, containing the entire line-up of Poland's 1994 METAL MANIA line-up:

- TRAUMA - *Unable to React*
- TRAUMA - *Hidden Seed*
- TRAUMA - *Dust*
- ESQUARIEL - *Requiem*
- ESQUARIEL - *Timequake*
- ESQUARIEL - *Pure Formality*
- KRISIUN - *Dawn of Flagellation*
- KRISIUN - *Murderer*
- ENSLAVED - *The Dead Stare*
- ENSLAVED - *As Fire Swept Clean the Earth*
- ENSLAVED - *The Crossing*
- MSG - *Lights Out*
- MSG - *Arachnophobic*
- MSG - *Into the Arena*
- TIAMAT - *The Sleeping Beauty*
- TSA - *Proceder*
- TSA - *51*
- TSA - *Kocica*
- MOONSPELL - *Alma Mater*
- MOONSPELL - *Vampira*
- MOONSPELL - *Mephisto*
- SOULFLY - *Prophecy*
- SOULFLY - *Bring It*

METALMANIA 2004 starts off with a bang with three songs from hardcore moshers TRAUMA. One of the few non DM bands on the bill, ESQUARIAL perform 3 songs (in Polish yet!) with some guy from the Polish metal scene, Grzegorz Kupczyk. KRISIUN are up next with more death noize. ENSLAVED surprised me by rising above their Death Metal roots with actual musicianship and song writing. MSG tore through 3 live cuts from the metal legend Michael Schenker. Next TIAMAT invaded the stage and performed their song *The Sleeping Beauty* with Fernando Ribeiro of MOONSPELL. Next up are Polish metal legends TSA who perform 3 songs in an enjoyable no-frills MOTORHEAD style Rock N Roll. MOONSPELL co-headlines along with the generic SOULFLY. I gotta say, Portuguese legends MOONSPELL upstage that band who rides the coattails of SEPULTURA. One major problem I have with METALMANIA 2004 is that pretty much every band here is either Death or Black Metal, with the exception of MSG, whose hard-edged 1980s style metal shredding took center stage for me. His new band is as talented as he is, though the vocalist is clearly in the WHITESNAKE mode. Michael Schenker himself used to resemble a sweet poser-boy in his early outings (UFO, SCORPIONS, etc.), but these days he looks more like Lemmy. Getting back to my problems with this DVD is the line-up. Last years edition of METALMANIA (2003) had its share of Death Metal morons, but standing head and shoulders above it all were worthy

performances from SAXON, OPETH, ANATHEMA, and DELIGHT.

The folks at Metal Mind Productions sank a lot of money into the filming and production of this DVD. The METAL MANIA 2004 show was shot on real film using professional multi-camera set-ups which buzz around the performers on stage making for a truly memorable visual presentation. The kinetic camera work captures each song with eye-pleasing angles and tracking shots over the not only the bands, but the audience as well. The show is presented in 1.33.1 format; the image is very movie-like, with crisp clarity and image depth. METAL MANIA 2004 comes with Dolby Digital 2.0 and 5.1 audio options, both of which exhibit crystal clear fidelity and superb bass. The DD 5.1 has superior depth and sound imaging. From the Special Features menu, you can view detailed textual overviews of the history of each band on this disc. There is another interesting text based option that examines in detail the history of Poland's METALMANIA festival, including the bands who played at each show. There is also a Photo Gallery of the bands that played at METALMANIA 2004. You can access some desktop images as well. Metal Mind Productions also included an accompanying audio CD featuring the following bands/songs:

- SPINAL CORD - *Tears*
- BRIGHT OPHIDIA - *Downer*
- ASGAARD - *Mystery Ov Tzar's Visionairre Act 2*
- AROPHIA RED SUN- *Nameless Rot*
- DEVILYN - *Deceived Conscious*
- MUTILATION - *Fear Came Over Us*
- HEDFIRST - *Scars*
- TENEBROSUS - *Lost and Forgotten*
- IMMEMORIAL - *Day of Anger*
- THE CHAINSAW - *Mechanism of Inspiration*
- LUNE AD NOCTUM - *Avast!*
- CENTURION - *Extermination*
- NEOLITH - 8

Since METALMANIA 2004 consists mainly of Hardcore and Death Metal bands aimed at the low-I.Q. crowd, I can't really recommend it for real music lovers. With the exception of ENSLAVED, MOONSPELL, and MSG, the talentless bands on the bill are generic and are only there to demonstrate how evil they are. Still if you are into that crap, you may be interested in purchasing a copy of METALMANIA 2004 because the disc looks and sounds excellent--and in this area the disc excels beyond the poorly conceived DVDs of the Metal Blade, Nuclear Blast, or Century Media labels. But there is not much on the DVD to offer fans of real Heavy Metal.

[METALMANIA 2004 is available from DVDEmpire.com](http://www.dvdcult.com/mus_MetalM04.htm)

-- Jason the Mason

Movie: 2.5
Video: 4.5
Audio: 4.0
Extras: 2.0
Overall: 3.0

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