

# DVD Reviews

**VOIVOD**  
**DVOD-1**  
 Music Video Distributors, Inc. (DR-475)

Incredibly, *DVOD-1* is legendary Montreal progressive thrash band Voivod's first DVD, covering the formative period of the strange tale thus far, 1983-91. Of note, guitarist Denis "Piggy" D'Amour died of cancer last year, so all of this takes on extra poignancy (D'Amour had recorded guitar tracks for the band's next album, which is now in the works). Also, this DVD features the lineup with vocalist Snake and bassist Blackie (Snake is now back in the band), as well as when bassist Jason Newsted from Metallica first played with Voivod.

The collection is a bit of a dog's breakfast, as they say in England. It's a bit of everything, some of it a little dull with crappy sound here and there along with some grainy footage. Still, the boys have scrounged up a bunch of archival goodies. The centerpiece is the video collection — six in all — charting Voivod's origins from a brutal yet smart, rural Quebec thrash band through to their classy, dramatically lit video for their hit cover of Pink Floyd's "Astronomy Domine." Along the way, one gets a glimpse into the witty sci-fi world of drummer, lyricist and band artist Away,

who gets his own section to display some of his cartoony, black-and-white drawings of various futuristic, toxic ghoulsapes. There is also video-shoot footage, which pulls back the curtain on the process, mostly demonstrating the hurry-up-and-wait aspect that drives most bands nuts. Snake and Piggy are also seen spreading their eccentric pixie dust in the recording studio, Piggy slashing away in the control room, his obtuse melodies graphic and fresh and foreign. Live footage is offered from '86, '88, '89 and '91. The '89 footage was recorded at Musique Plus, the French language version of MuchMusic or MTV as it were.

That's it, nothing more and nothing less. By that, I mean it's decent but not revelatory. There's no deep conversations or head-shaking backstage dust-ups; it's all business, all 80 minutes of it. Ultimately, one becomes re-convinced why this band meant so much to underground metal practitioners and grungesters such as Dave Grohl and Soundgarden. Fecund creativity oozed from every pore; even if speed and density and a palpable, intended roughness demanded mental investment from the listener, rewards would be forthcoming. Let's hope there's more video footage forthcoming as well, given that the last

15 active years of Voivod insanity, most notably the years (1994-2000) helmed by vocalist and bassist Eric Forrest, haven't been addressed by *DVOD-1*.  
 — Martin Popoff

**SOUTHERN ROCK ALLSTARS**  
**Trouble's Comin' Live**  
**Tazer (Two DVDs)**

The Southern Rock Allstars' two-DVD set *Trouble's Comin' Live* showcases the very best of the band, with live performances, interviews and zany antics from the road. Disc one features live footage from around the world, from SRA staples such as "Tough Situation" and "Ghost Of You" to Jimmy Farrar's (formerly of Molly Hatchet) intense vocal on "Mississippi Queen." "Morning Dew" features something I have never seen in all my years of SRA shows, and that is Jay Johnson (formerly of The Rossington Band) trading guitar for keyboard duties. The song is awesome, and it is so great to see all of the shots of the late Jackson Spires (of Blackfoot, who died in 2005) on the drum kit. In fact, there is quite a lot of Spires in this set, and I found myself several times in that twilight zone between laughter and tears.

There are plenty of the songs we all love, too, including "Beatin' The Odds," "Mother" (with a quick but classic close-up of Spires acting up), "Train Train" and "Stump Jumpin'." Mike Estes (formerly of Lynyrd Skynyrd) is included in many of the jams, and if you love Dave Hlubek (Molly Hatchet), hold on to your Captain Morgan, because there is some smokin' footage of Big Dave rockin'. Also included is SRA's cover of Kiss' "Rock And Roll All Night" and an amazing rendition of "Highway Song" featuring the Muscle Shoals High School Chorus. For all the Duane Roland (Molly Hatchet) fans, there are some performances with him as well as with Blackfoot's Charlie Hargrett and Greg T. Walker, as well as the late Pete Gedes.

There's an interlude at the end of disc one featuring soft music and photos of Spires. It's a beautiful tribute.

Disc two is packed with "Mythadventures" of the SRA, including Hlubek's take on Swedish rum and some hilarious footage of the band having fun and being crazy. Perhaps the most surreal part of the whole package is Johnson's "Davezilla vs. Ultra Man." I won't give away the plot, other than to say Godzilla eats Hlubek and comments on what a mouthful he is. Insane? You bet. That's what makes it so much fun. The crazy hand-held camera shots make you feel as if you're watching your cousin Eddie's home movies, but then it dawns on you that these guys are rock stars. How cool is that?

For any fan of The SRA, or Southern rock in general, this DVD is a must-have. It's packed with hard-hitting, rebel-rousing rock 'n' roll, humor and a huge dose of love for the fans and for absent friends. Priceless.

— Michael Buffalo Smith

