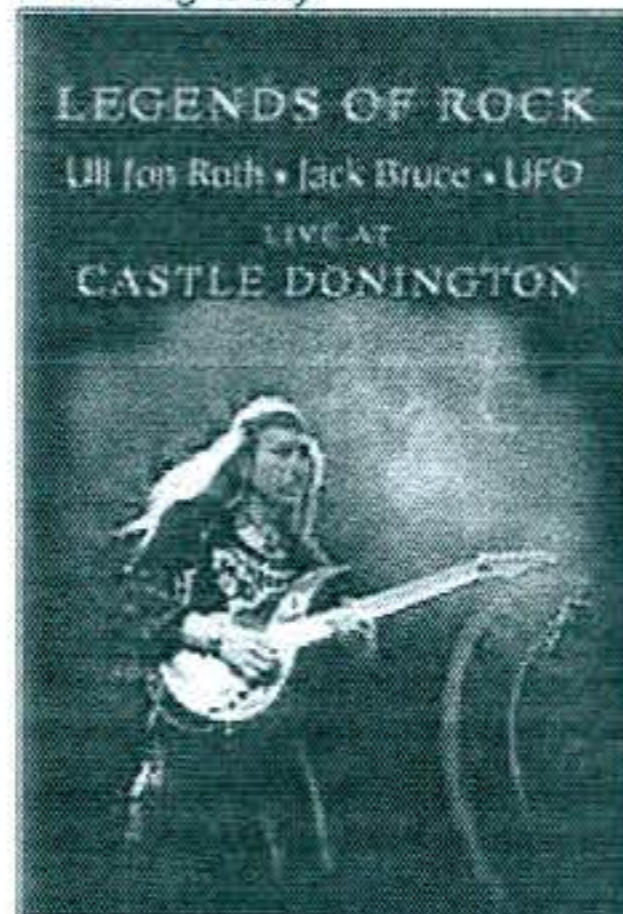


VISUAL AGGRESSION

ALICE COOPER 'Live In Montreux' – 4 studio albums after his last live release comes a DVD/CD documenting the **Dirty Diamonds** tour. Much like the stripped down vibe of his last 2 albums this is a no frills gig with the emphasis being mostly on the songs with minimal theatrics (by Alice standards). Although he does mix up his catalog with a few curveballs, such as opener "Department Of Youth." Many of the staples remain: "No More Mr. Nice Guy", "Be My Lover", "Under My Wheels", etc. His band seems to have under-gone a makeover with shorter hair & Damon Johnson & Keri Kelli now on guitars. Eric Singer proves to be the greatest Coop drummer since **Neal Smith**—with a solo spot following "Black Widow." "Dirty Diamonds", "Woman Of Mass Distraction" & "What Do You Want From Me" all out-shine their studio versions (IMHO). Rarities include "Steven", "Killer" & "Wish I Was Born In Beverly Hills" (not played live since 1979), where Calico makes an appearance dressed as Paris Hilton. The *downside* is a tendency of lumping songs into quick medleys with 1 or 2 minutes of tunes like "Killer" & "I Love The Dead", which takes away much of the dramatic qualities of these songs. "I Love The Dead", with its execution by guillotine, to me, seemed *much* more effective when Alice sang the song *looking up* at the guillotine & to the hooded executioner at his side than the way they wheel it out & cut his head off in a *hurry* now. The execution reeks of going through the motions more & more as the years pass, so by not delivering that build up—the climax is now a reverse anti-climax.

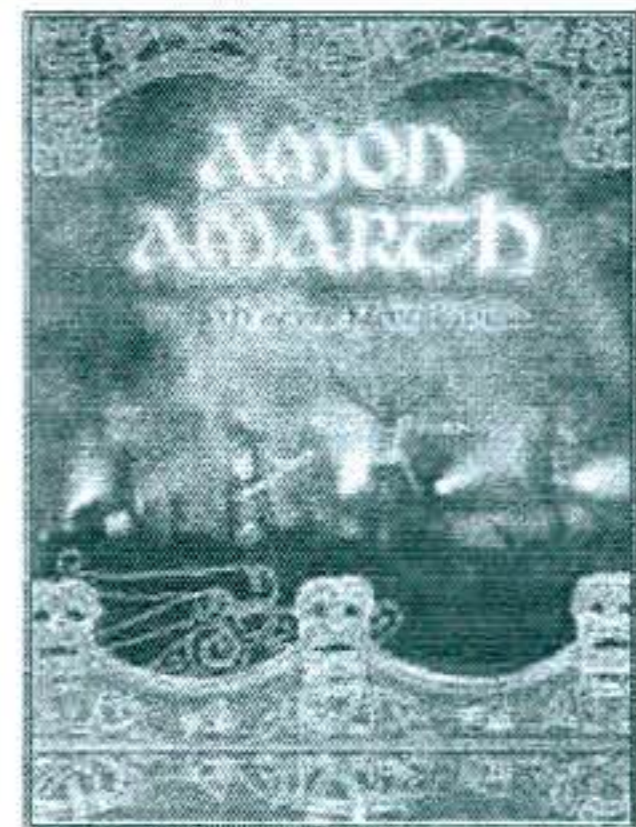


ULI JON ROTH 'Live At Castle Donnington' (SPV) - 2CD/1 DVD re-issue features a 15 song set from 6/23/01 with a mixture of material from solo stuff to UFO, Cream & Hendrix. Starting with some instrumentals ("Trail In The Wind", "Sky Overture", "Aranjuez" & "The King Returns") showcasing his otherworldly licks. Joining him first are Pete Way, Phil Mogg & Michael Schenker (of UFO) for "Let It Roll" & "Rock Bottom" (with the 2 ex-Scorpions guitarists trading off solos & doing harmony parts). On the latter Schenker changes his famous solo & its most memorable lines are done as harmonies (intro/outro of solo section). Jack Bruce takes the stage for extended jams of "Sunshine Of Your Love" & "White Room", where Uli breaks into a wah-drenched psychedelic mode for 2 all-time classics. A duo of Hendrix covers illustrates his love for Jimi as he taps into the spiritual side of James Marshall's unique style. "All Along The Watchtower" & "Little Wing", have rarely been covered this faithfully—simply because 99% of guitarists who can do the licks usually forsake the feel that made them what they were. Cream relic "Spoonful" has extended jamming & the closers "Fireworks Jam" & "Atlantis" has Uli & Jack tearing it up as fireworks explode in the night sky.



METAL MANIA 2005 (Metal Mind) – A.k.a shit you will *never* see in America. This DVD/CD package contains 39 songs from the MM '05 fest. With 2 songs from **Amon Amarth**, 4 from **Dark Funeral**, 3 from **Napalm Death** & several other bands who played, a pro-shot recording that looks and sounds killer (+extras).

AMON AMARTH 'Wrath Of The Norsemen' (MB) – A triple live DVD documenting all the big Viking hits from their vaults. The main event is an epic 22 song set at the Live Music Hall in Cologne (8/16/05). Presenting an expanded stage show that was only done once. For this gig AA load up on bigger production & a longer set list. Complete with flaming pyres, pyrotechnics, extras carrying swords & shields, flames & a sword fight. A behind the scenes feature; **The Vikings Are Coming** has rehearsals for the gig & the band commenting on how excited they personally were to play with this larger presentation. A 10-song set from the summer breeze fest. In Abtsgmund (8/18/05) & a 13 song set in Stuttgart on 10/2/05 present their more typical sets from the same tour & DVD3 has 2 shows from the **FATE OF NORNS** era in 2004; an appearance at Wacken (8/6/04) & a 16 song set from the CD release show in Rockfabrik, Ludwigsburg (9/5/04). I'm surprised they didn't release a live CD as well, but this footage should draw some well-deserved attention to their back catalog.



METAL'S DARKSIDE 'The Hard & The Furious' (Magick) – Hosted by the lovely Jasmine St. Claire, this brings back the video magazine into the DVD age with a handful of interviews from around 2004. Jasmine speaks with Corpsegrinder of **CANNIBAL CORPSE**, Satyr of **SATYRICON**, **DEATH ANGEL** & Vinnie Paul & Patrick of **DAMAGEPLAN**. At least she tries to make it fun & unpredictable. Highlight? A somewhat un-censored video of "Fuel For Hatred." Also some cool extras worth checking out.

METAL HELL #1