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VENTURA COUNTY'S NEWSWEEKLY

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MUSIC

Blood, sweat and other body fluids

One man freak show GG Allin caught on new DVD of low budget doc

~ By MATTHEW SINGER ~



The first image of GG Allin in Todd Phillips' 1993 documentary *Hated* (available Aug. 7 on a Special Edition DVD) sums up everything he was about: standing before a small, bewildered audience, naked as the day he was born (the size of his genitals gives that phrase extra meaning), smashing his face with a microphone until blood pours from his forehead, barfing ridiculously vulgar lyrics in a voice somewhere between a dry heave and a yak screaming.

That is all you need to see to understand the man hailed by everyone who has ever heard him as the most depraved figure in the history of underground music. There is nothing deeper or more complex about him. Oh, he tried to package his violent, grotesque stage act — full of self-mutilation, coprophagia (look it up) and mildly coherent sub-Stooges thrash — as some kind of statement on the bestial nature of mankind, but



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ART & CULTURE**Castles made of sand and (and straw)**

When it comes to building homes, the Natural Building Network suggests going old school — way old school

The best of youth

Four Oxnard College students prove "Cool Kids Never Had the Time"

Oxnard Salsa Festival

Photos by Stephanie Nice

MUSIC**True Blue**

English singer-songwriter Mikal Blue is a renaissance man in his Westlake studio

Battlefield Ojai

Ten young local bands duke it out (musically speaking)

Blood, sweat and other

really, he was just a circus sideshow attraction — the Aristocrats joke come to life, minus the clever punch line.

Phillips, future director of Old School and Road Trip, was a mere film student at New York University when he discovered Allin and thought he would make the perfect subject for his senior project. Who wouldn't? The dude's biography reads like the script for a Harmony Korine movie: Born in rural New Hampshire to an antisocial, fanatically religious father who named him Jesus Christ Allin (his mother had it changed to Kevin when he started school), he often went to school in drag and had his first drug experience when his brother Merle put acid in his French fries. Phillips brought Allin and his band, the Murder Junkies, out to New York following Allin's release from a Michigan prison (violating his parole) and tried to set up a show for them, but even in the pre-Giuliani Big Apple, venues wanted nothing to do with a performer that unsavory. A typical GG Allin concert would last about 10 minutes before the club owner freaked and pulled the plug, but to Allin's credit, he managed to cram a lot into little time: fist fights with the audience, onstage defecation, etc. Obviously, his reputation preceded him.

Eventually, Phillips did find him a gig. Two, in fact: at some typically dingy hellhole, and at NYU, where administrators believed they were going to get a "safe" spoken word performance a la previous guest Henry Rollins. Phillips' camera doesn't spare the gory details in either instance, although the most disturbing footage comes via a fan, who invited Allin to his apartment for a party and proudly fulfilled his request for "[entertainment](#)." Let's just say it involves the kind of shower where the participant actually ends up filthier than when they started.

What does any of this have to do with music? Allin claimed he was "bringing danger back to rock'n'roll," but what he failed to realize was rock'n'roll is supposed to be socially dangerous, not physically harmful. Black boys dancing with white girls upturned the cultural fabric of the entire country; a guy eating his own shit is just stupid, not to mention counterproductive. Hated is less than an hour long, and even at that length his shtick, however extreme, wears thin. After being bombarded with scene after scene of senseless shock tactics, the most striking moment is one in which Allin — who, to the surprise of no one, died of a heroin overdose not long after the completion of the documentary — strums an acoustic guitar and sings Warren Zevon's "Carmelita." And, believe it or not, he actually had a good, ragged, outlaw country-style voice. Now there's a true shock. ★

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