

**TAD**

Busted Circuits
and Ringing Ears
MVD ENTERTAINMENT

Big boys don't cry

Tad Doyle, the man-mountain who fronted the band Tad, left a permanent

mark on me as 1990 turned into 1991 and I was ringing in the new year at warehouse party near the Pike Place Market in Seattle. Skin Yard was on stage, the beer had been flowing freely all night—Red Hook, of course—and I was hammered. Positioned at the front of the stage, which was a roiling, writhing mess of sweaty bodies and long hair, I suddenly took one square on the jaw and was knocked on my ass. I looked up to see Tad looming over me, clutching his head, righting himself and then launching back into the pit. Soused enough not to be too concerned about the pulsing ache in my jaw, I held my position through the rest of Skin Yard's set only to discover blood dripping onto the front of my t-shirt as I shuffled up toward my friend's apartment on Capitol Hill. Sure enough, that motherfucker had split my jaw open and left me bleeding. (I have no idea if there was any reciprocal damage, but I doubt it.) Luckily, nothing was broken, but I did get a nice little scar in the deal.

Yeah, this DVD brought back some memories—some obviously more painful than others. More importantly, though, it reinforced what an amazing and devastatingly heavy band—Sub Pop's heaviest, by far—Tad were. And it brings to light what a raw deal the foursome ultimately got, burned by easily avoided lawsuits when they were on Sub Pop and then dropped twice by major labels every time they started to get some momentum. There are, of course, the usual band dramas—drugs, drummers coming and going, and an acrimonious split with founding member Gary Thorstensen, who refused to participate in the film—but the real story is that this was a really great band that never got its due.

The production quality is good (not great), the editing a little clumsy, but it's a testament to Tad's popularity within the Seattle music scene that dudes like Kim Thayil (Soundgarden), Mark Arm (Mudhoney), Krist Novoselic (Nirvana), producer Jack Endino and Sub Pop founders Jonathan Poneman and Bruce Pavitt (who is no longer part of the label) all participated in

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Busting Circuits and had nothing but positive things to say. Thayil, in fact, swears that in 20 years he's never heard anyone say a single bad thing about Doyle. Well, if he woulda asked me, I'd have told him that the giant son of a bitch split my fuckin' jaw open. —ADEM TEPEDELEN

**VADER**

And Blood Was Shed in
Warsaw

METAL MIND

The Force is strong with this one

My first live experience
with Vader was in 1993

(with Dismember and Deicide), and it took all but 60 seconds before the stage monitors were smoking due to an electrical malfunction. We romantically thought Vader's Iron Curtain might was so great that puny American amps were no match for songs like "Final Massacre." (Ah, the good old days.) Anyway, Vader soldiered on at half volume—blame Deicide!—and still kicked heaps of arse—so much so that we all bought shirts. Well, an eternity later and the Poles still sound as good, if not better, than bands half their age.

Want proof? Besides seven consistently good—even classic in the case of *The Ultimate Incantation* and *De Profundis*—albums, Vader have issued an equal amount of live albums and VHS/DVDs showing that before Behemoth, Decapitated, Yattering, et al. it was Piotr Wiwczarek's crew who bravely carried the torch from Olsztyn to the rest of world. Which brings us to *And Blood Was Shed in Warsaw*.

Not unlike 2004's *Night of the Apocalypse*, Metal Mind thinks songs about Sumerian gods, necromancy and other nerdy occult topics deserve seven cameras, a light show stolen from the last David Gilmour tour and Bruckheimer-style editing to get the point across. I certainly don't mind—basically, it's Vader in speaker-kill 5.1 with a seizure-inducing light show—and nor should you with four tracks pulled from *Impressions in Blood*, three from *The Art of War* EP and *De Profundis*, two each *Litany* and *Black to the Blind*, and singles from *The Beast*, *Revelations* and *The Ultimate Incantation*. The sound, as is the case with all Metal Mind products, is exceptional, and the extras, while conventional, won't bore you to tears; the song/video to "Sword of the Witcher" is like if Vader interpreted "Lucretia My Reflection." Expecting *And Blood Was Shed in Warsaw* to not kick heaps of

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arse is like expecting nü-death metal not to sound like eighteenth-rate Suffocation clones. Some things are just a given. —CHRIS DICK

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

The Unholy Alliance
Chapter II: Preaching
to the Perverted

AMERICAN

Diabolus in video

As DVDs go, *Chapter II* of
Slayer's Unholy Alliance

tour is spartan. Backstage interviews and concert footage—that's it. Said interviews are brief and bland. We learn that Thine Eyes Bleed have been working hard. From Children of Bodom, we discover that Finnish men get naked when they're drunk. Lamb of God's Randy Blythe discloses that he is having fun on this tour. Mastodon don't reveal half as much. Most importantly, we learn from Kerry King that Slayer shows have more girls now than before. The first visible female audience member appears 24:15 into this DVD. I had to rewind to make sure I didn't see a ghost.

The footage of the July 13, 2006 show in Vancouver is more successful. Seven cameras record the action in high fidelity, while a pristine soundboard mix captures every string scrape and clam. For supposedly being virtuosos, Children of Bodom are startlingly sloppy. Mastodon, on the other hand, are on fire, fluidly dishing out hot licks over the one long polydactylous fill that is Brann Dailor's drumming. The other bands deliver their goods professionally and predictably. Guitars are panned hard left and right, useful for parsing how King and Jeff Hanneman divide their labor. The editing at times verges on seizure-inducing, with some strange choices. Once, when Alexi Laiho launches into a solo, the editing immediately cuts to... the bassist. On the other hand, we get faithful close-ups of every keyboard solo; Janne Warman's home must be wallpapered with Jens Johansson posters.

Fitting five bands onto one DVD means giving each one short shrift. Editing cuts Slayer's set to 10 songs—no "Raining Blood"??? Mastodon get three songs, Children of Bodom get two, and Thine Eyes Bleed and Lamb of God make one-song cameos. There's also a pre-show parking lot feature, which basically consists of people yelling "Fuckin' Slayer!" At least it yields this howler: "Fuckin' Slayer and beer go together like fuckin' tits 'n' ass!" —COSMO LEE

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