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Reviews Database > MUSIC DVD > MENTORS: EL DUCE VITA (2007)

MENTORS: EL DUCE VITA (2007)

Review by Mark Jason Murray



Released by Music Video Distributors
 Running Time: 50 minutes
 Rating: Not Rated
 Color format: Color
 Audio/Subtitles: Stereo or surround
 Region Code: ALL, NTSC
 Special Features: 3 bonus live performances



The Mentors are a ridiculously immature sex and booze obsessed rock n' roll band and I have been a fan for over twenty years. Calling their music "Rape Rock" the band has courted controversy their entire career. From being a main target of Tipper Gore and the mid-80's PMRC music censorship trials to singer, El Duce's claim he was offered payment by Courtney Love to kill her husband, Kurt Cobain of Nirvana, only to be killed himself several days later when wandering drunk on train tracks near his Southern California home. Disguised in executioner hoods with band aliases like "Sickie Wifebeater" and "Dr. Heathen Scum" and song titles like "Peeping Tom", "Goin' Through Your Purse", "Sandwich of Love" and "Adultery", one can discern the level of lyrical content (then take what you think and make it ten times worse!). Surprisingly, the band's musicianship is pretty good, at least in the studio, delivering some solid, heavy rock n' roll. Their live show (and one of the best times I've had at a concert) is another story as the band members are often completely drunk, nowhere to be found, or a bit too drunk to competently play their instruments. It's all just a testosterone fueled tongue-in-cheek bunch of fun, yet you need a very broad sense of humor to take it all in.

This release of "El Duce Vita" (a great title!) marks the first commercially available DVD of the band. As a whole the product is a rather mixed bag. Serious fans will already have the main attraction, "The Wretched World of the Mentors", a 30 minute compilation of amateurish and obnoxious videos for the tracks "On the Rag", "Forty Ouncer", "Golden Showers", "Donkey Dick", "When You're Horny, You're Horny", "All Women are Insane" and "Sex Slave". With production values and imagery solidly in the gutter, the videos are about as sloppy as the band's live performances. For the most part, each video features random shots of the band playing live interspersed with all manner of hi-jinks, obscene gestures, trashy nudity, large fake penises, and well... even menstrual blood, pushing the limits of bad taste.

Not surprisingly, the material has been mastered off of what appears to be a mutli-generation video cassette (it was probably originally filmed and edited on video decks as well), making the whole thing look like an underground bootleg tape. The audio itself leaves quite a bit to desire at times as well.

As for the discs bonus features, we are treated to segments of three separate live performances, all of much better quality than the main feature. It's great to see the band

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live, sometimes sloppy and sometimes in tune and on time, yet I wonder why we only get short segments of each of these shows. Wouldn't it have been better to include one full live show, than three partial segments?

The back cover boasts of more Mentors DVDs to come and let's hope that the quality improves a bit if there are any future releases. I personally would like to see their much earlier (shot on film!) material like "The Mentors Fuck Movie" with the classic "Get Up and Die" segment that was featured in the extremely underground and relatively unknown film, DU-BEAT-EO (1984, which starred El Duce and Joan Jett!). Or how about something that chronicles the band's origins and the life of El Duce? Regardless of what it is, I will surely want to check it out as I have always been a bit of a sucker for these guys. Long live El Duce!!



May 15, 2007

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