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## Grave

### Enraptured [DVD]

(MVD) Rated: N/A  
US release date: 16 January 2007  
UK release date: 4 December 2006

by **Adrien Begrand**

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By taking advantages of cheap production costs in the company's home base of Poland, Metal Mind Productions has been able to lure many of extreme metal's finest to Warsaw to film concerts for DVD release, and each time out, the end result is fantastic. Many bands, especially in the death metal realm, rarely get an opportunity to put together such a slickly-produced live document, and Metal Mind gives the bands and its fans true bang for their buck. Each show is expertly filmed with an absurd amount of cameras, from multiple hand-helds to a crane, the editing is always professional (unlike some bands that insist on editing their own material, resulting in cuts that border on epileptic – Steve Harris, I'm looking at you), and the surround mix is always crushing. Such noteworthy artists as Obituary, Dark Tranquillity, and Tiamat have all made the journey to Eastern Europe and left with excellent DVDs in the can, and now you can count Sweden's Grave as the next in a growing list of bands given the Metal Mind treatment.



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Formed in the late-'80s, Grave quickly made a name for itself during the early-'90s explosion of Swedish death metal. While bands like At the Gates, Dark Tranquillity, and In Flames carved a then-highly unique niche for themselves by accentuating their brand of unrelentingly brutal music with an unprecedented emphasis on melody, bands like Grave and Entombed focused primarily on groove, spawning an obscure subgenre many would refer to as "death 'n' roll". As forward-thinking as their other death metal peers, these bands also paid homage to their classic metal and hardcore punk roots, often locking their songs into midtempo grooves, and giving us music with the undeniable power of extreme metal, but delivered in such a way that compelled the listener to *move*, instead of just mindlessly moshing. Grave was (and continues to be) especially adept at the style; along with Entombed's legendary *Wolverine Blues*, Grave's 1994 disc *Soulless* is regarded as a death 'n' roll benchmark, and a recent example of how ingeniously the band performs this music can be heard on their 2006 cover of Alice In Chains' "Them Bones", which simultaneously cranks up the intensity *and* the swagger, which the original classic track only hinted at.

Recorded in front of a receptive but polite Warsaw crowd in August of last year, *Enraptured* features a taut, 16 song set by the band, running around an hour and a half. True to the informality of death metal, the members of Grave (vocalist/guitarist Ola Lindgren, guitarist Jonas Torndal, bassist Fredrik Isaksson, and drummer Pelle Ekegren) look like they just stepped off the street and onto the stage. Unlike more flamboyant forms of metal like black metal and power metal, the emphasis in death metal is less on what's going on onstage, and more about what's coming through the imposing stacks of amplifiers, and consequently, unless you're a fan of the genre, you might find yourself bored quickly. These guys are all business in concert, with very little between-song chatter (Lindgren's habit of growling the decidedly non-metal word "alrighty" never fails to make this writer smile) and very little movement; death metal is a very physically strenuous

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form of music to perform, so all energy and concentration goes into those sharp riffs, blinding shredding, and machine gun-like blastbeats.

However, while there is little action onstage save for the band's technical twiddling, that's where the outstanding work of Metal Mind comes in, as the crew offers us superb glimpses of the musicians in action, affording us crisply defined shots of guitar solos and drum fills. It's the kind of stuff that guitar geeks drool over, and they will love seeing Lindgren and Torndal in action so up close, as they and the rest of the band tear through a set that only gives a brief nod to 2006's *As Rapture Comes* album, placing stronger emphasis on their early-'90s output instead, from ancient fan favorites like "Deformed", "Into the Grave" and "Extremely Rotten Flesh", to such classic *Soulless* tracks as "Turning Black", "Bullets Are Mine", and "Soulless".

As with most Metal Mind DVDs, the focus is more on the actual concert performance instead of an overload of extra features, but fans do get a small number of bonuses, including an interview with Lindgren and Torndal, as well as three music videos. Many music DVDs place too much emphasis on extras, but the fact that both Grave and Metal Mind have enough confidence in the live recording to let the concert do the majority of the talking speaks volumes about the high quality of the product.

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