

MUSIC DVD NUCLEAR ASSAULT

'Louder Harder Faster'
LOCOMOTIVE

Louder, harder and faster than what exactly? The reformation of Nuclear Assault several years back could have/should have been a defining moment in the rebirth of thrash, but – and this DVD unfortunately drives the point home in no uncertain terms – the band would actually have been best advised to remain a classic memory as opposed to shambling across our radar once again and sully a perfectly good legacy. This DVD features the band's so-so set from 2005's Louder Harder Faster festival, which never quite gels to real satisfaction, a mish-mash of atrocious sounding archive footage, several throwaway music videos, half a dozen slide shows (nicely set to the original 'Survive' demos, making them some of the few highlights on the disc), a rather droll interview and two unreleased tracks, one of which is a sublimely brilliant rip on Celtic Frost. The band have crammed as much on here for your money's worth as humanly possible, but most of it's too messy and/or pointless to get really excited about, and would've been far better served up as extras on an expanded deluxe version of 'Game Over'.

[4] IAN GLASPER



STRYPER

'Live! In Puerto Rico'
MVD

Dissing Stryper may bring a certain expression involving fish and barrels to mind, yet the fact remains that anyone wishing for a piece of documentary evidence of the fundamental incompatibility of Jesus and the power chord should look no further than this delightful 2004 worship bonanza. All the standard Ozymandian showbiz vainglory of the reformed hair metal arena band is here in abundance, yet with a curiously creepy and surreal twist. Pretty-boy frontman Michael Sweet appears to have nicked most of his stage moves from Julio Iglesias, while his drummer brother Robert

makes like Poison's Rikki Rockett with a change of yellow-and-black hat every song and has the dubious drumming ability of Beatmaster V from Body Count. Sure, there are some agreeable if clearly sampled Queen-style harmonies here amidst the succession of operatic power-AOR horror shows, with the God-fearin' Priest of 'To Hell With The Devil' the high watermark, yet it's swiftly followed by the shuddering nadir of 'Honestly', an outlandishly gloopy ballad that would disgrace Chris De Burgh, replete with some evangelical preaching that's scarier than anything you'll witness at a Whitehouse gig. Worse still, some of the blown-away Puerto Rican punters, erm, raising hell in the audience here are clearly taking the piss if the rivethead in the front row in a Deicide t-shirt is anything to go by.

[3] FOR COMEDY VALUE] JIM MARTIN

MOVIE DVD SATAN'S BLOOD

Dir: Carlos Puerto
REDEMPTION

Saucy Spanish Satanic sleaze from 1978, catching the post-Franco anti-censorship mood at its blasphemous zenith; the pre-title sequence alone features a young lady on an altar being stripped, fucked and stabbed by a monk (which is effectively unconnected to the rest of the film) so there's no hanging around for salacious thrills, although the plot (such as it is) takes a while to establish itself. A young couple are invited to the isolated mansion of a couple they've just met at traffic lights, where all sorts of orgiastic devil-worshipping, suicidal-sex-murder-shit kicks off. The film is less inhibited about full-frontal female nudity than it is about yer actual horror, so while there is a grubby, disorientating weirdness about 'Satan's Blood' that might unsettle if watched alone late at night, there's not much Satan or blood in it. But at 82 minutes it keeps the attention and has a twist ending that's part ludicrous, part brilliant. The DVD looks better than it has any right to, but alas none of the intriguing sounding Region 1 extras are reproduced here, we just get some poxy stills and trailers. In summary then: lashings of dead dog and flange.

[7] CHRIS CHANTLER

BOOK 'SID VICIOUS: NO ONE IS INNOCENT'

Alan Parker
ORION BOOKS

Timeless icon of punk rock, tragically dead before he could realise his full potential, or hopeless junkie, more concerned with how he was perceived than how he played?

Sid Vicious was a sneering, larger-than-life caricature, whose harsh childhood and ridiculous antics make a compelling story, but whether the world really needs a *third* book by Alan Parker about him is open to debate. 'No One Is Innocent' is far more in-depth than Parker's previous 'Too Fast To Live', but nowhere near as lavishly illustrated, and seeing as most of Sid's appeal was visual (it certainly wasn't musical – the poor lad could barely string two notes together) this is something of a failing if you're tuning into the Pistols myth for the first time. If this isn't your first time, then there's a lot of old material rehashed here, but the foreword by scheming entrepreneur Malcolm McLaren is quite a coup, and the extensive interviews with Sid's mum help shed some light on just why her little monster turned out the way he did.

[5] IAN GLASPER

VIDEO GAMES 'THE DARKNESS'

TAKE 2
Formats: PS3, X360

Being a granite-hard Mafia gunman has its perks. Being one possessed by a strapping great demonic entity is even better. Especially when the latter is voiced by an unrecognisably guttural Mike Patton doing his finest, and unlikeliest, impression of Gollum's gruffer, chain-smoking older cousin. Based on a '90s comic series, 'The Darkness' is an entertaining first-person mash of Tarantino chic, supernatural horror and twisted comic book humour. You star as a betrayed hitman, whose one-man survival/vengeance mission is abetted by an ability to tap into the 'dark side' whenever he's surrounded by shadows. So not only is there the usual gunplay to savour, you also get to demand bullet protection from a pair of flanking, monster-headed tentacles, scout immediate areas in the form of a spectral snake and, more hilariously, summon a variety of perversely cute 'darkling' critters, who rampage around doing things like blowing up walls (and themselves!), manning machine guns and slowly removing bad gangster's heads with rusty saws. If that sounds like fun, which it bloody well is, you should probably be buying/renting/stealing/demonically raising this game, pronto.

[9] STEPHEN DAULTREY

'MANHUNT 2'

ROCKSTAR GAMES

Formats: Wii, PS2, PSP

Citing "unremitting bleakness and callousness of tone", the BBFC's refusal to even give 'Manhunt 2' an age rating means that it's now effectively banned in the UK (possible appeal pending). 'They' claim



there's little to do outside of stalking villainous sadists and despatching them in spectacularly brutal ways. True, it's nasty stuff, but then it is an extreme horror game. In places, we sliced one henchman, groin upwards, with a circular saw, decapitated another with a farmyard sickle and hole-punched a mouse-faced killer by hoisting him towards the ceiling on a two-pronged hook. Even darker, in a 'Hostel'-style death dungeon, an unsuspecting pain dealer was impaled to a dentist chair with multiple scalpels, before having fury vented upon his face with a tooth drill. All part of the game's new 'environmental kills', possibly nicked/inspired by 2005's 'The Punisher' game.

There's no doubt about it: 'Manhunt 2' is extremely adult, white-knuckle suspenseful and psychologically unnerving video game entertainment at its visceral mightiest. With the jolly 'Pirates Of The Caribbean' game getting a barmy 16+ rating ('arf!'), perhaps this banning had developed an unfortunate inevitability. Fingers crossed it's set for a reprieve in some capacity, because this is still an effective, story-led thriller.

Latest News: At the time of writing, Rockstar looked set to (temporarily) shelve 'Manhunt 2' while considering

their options. Reports suggested the game was poised for an 'Adult Only' rating in the US, with Sony Nintendo forbidding third parties from releasing games with such a rating for its systems.

[8] STEPHEN DAULTREY

'RESIDENT EVIL 4'

CAPCOM/NINTENDO

Format: Wii

A kind of Lovecraftian, doomy 'Resident Evil 4' is easily the most atmospheric 'Resi' thus far, but also the hardest. This new Wii version, adapted from 2005 PS2 masterpiece and deliciously woven into widescreen for those with the correct set-up, is marginally amped by the interactivity of the system's dual control, which while taking a while to master, is reasonably well implemented. Other than that the game's essentially the same maddening horror jaunt as before, supernatural, inhabited by lumbering ogres, rabid villagers wielding pitchforks, boat-guzzling lake behemoths and – the chief ingredient of every effective gothic yarn – chanting monks lurking about suitably unsettling churches. Probably essential if you're a Wii-owning 'Resi 4' virgin.

[8] STEPHEN DAULTREY