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Monday, 08 May 2006

The Best Coup DVD Ever!



Written by Brent Simon

Monday, 08 May 2006



While the representative sampling population may be a *little* small, I can say with a solid nod of affirmation that *The Best Coup DVD Ever!* almost certainly lives up to its billing. One of the more notoriously, fervently politically active groups of rap, the Oakland-based Coup drew national attention in the fall of 2001, when their album *Party Music* became a cultural flashpoint due to its original cover art. Completed three months prior to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, but originally slated for release shortly after

that time, the photo-shopped cover depicted the crew setting off an explosion in front of the World Trade Center using a guitar tuner and drumsticks. All sorts of misinformation spread like wildfire and the band's indie label, 75 Ark, had to postpone its release and subsequently pull the record off shelves in some areas, killing its already uphill-battle commercial prospects.

The Best Coup DVD Ever! dovetails nicely with a new album from the group, and plans for a month-long summer tour. Featuring guest vocals by Talib Kweli, The Roots' Black Thought and punk icon Jello Biafra, the bristling agitprop of *Pick a Bigger Weapon*, out this week from Epitaph, marks a welcome return to form for fans and followers of the group who have been anxiously awaiting a new record for almost five years. Likewise, this disc, featuring seven music videos and extensive interviews with Boots Riley and DJ Pam the Funkstress (third member E-Roc left the group on amicable terms after their sophomore effort) will satisfy rap fans hungry for an audio-visual fix.

The music videos included here are "Not Yet Free," "Dig It," a remix of "Funk," "Takin' These," "Fat Cats & Bigga Fish," "Ride the Fence" and what is possibly one of the best song titles of the past decade – "Me and Jesus the Pimp in a '79 Granada Last Night." Characterized by bass-driven backbeats and electronic production techniques overlaid with

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THIS MONTH IN PRINT



POLLS

What technology do you use MOST when listening to music?

- Satellite radio (XM, Sirius)
- Internet radio (Live365, Yahoo! Music, etc.)
- Terrestrial radio
- iPod, MP3 player, other digital music devices
- CDs and cassette tapes

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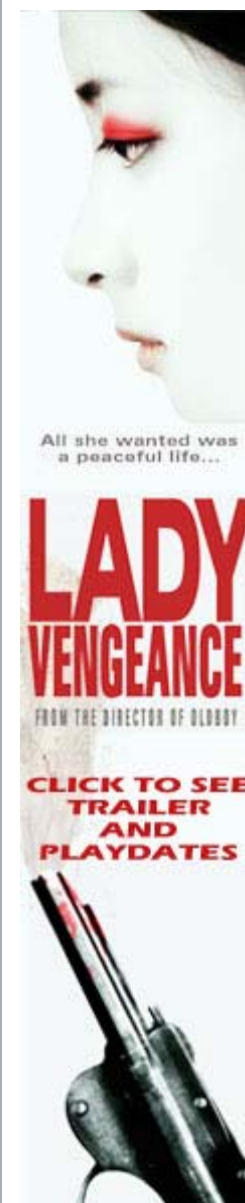
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FEATURED CLIP

humorously lurid lyrics assaying violence, crime, capitalism and the corruption and engrained self-interest of the American political scene, the Coup's music is aggressive in every sense of the word, both aurally and philosophically.

Special features on this brisk, hour-long disc, presented in a regular Amray case, are fairly sparse, but there is a nice travelogue, *Eating Forever*, co-directed by Riley and Chris Wroubel, and shot in South Africa during the collective "Black August" hip-hop tour of 2004. For those thinking for some reason the Coup's rhetoric is empty or impulsive posturing, this featurette is a must-see. The English 5.1 surround sound mix, meanwhile, provides plenty of muscle for the tunes herein. B- (Movie) C (Disc)

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