

Kindred spirits: Dwarves, Nirvana, G.G. Allin

Show: With Kelly Carmichael on Monday at the Velvet Lounge. Show starts at 9 p.m. 202-462-3213. http:// www.velvetloungedc.com.

Heavy-metal veteran Nick Oliveri is hardly the first rocker to record an unplugged set. But his new CD, "Death Acoustic," is unlike most such projects because it doesn't showcase the California musician's gentler side. Indeed, it suggests that he doesn't have one.

While Oliveri's work with Josh Homme, Mondo Generator and the Dwarves may be more in his wheelhouse, this CD features some acoustic guitar techniques. Oliveri alternates between vigorous folkie strumming and Spanish-style picking on these 10 stripped-down numbers, which include a few originals as well as covers of songs by the Dwarves and the notorious G.G. Allin.

Even if "Death Acoustic" is no "Sweet Baby Nick," the CD has its accessible moments. Oliveri sings of love as well as hate, and he has a way with a hook that could propel him into the mainstream. His version of the Misfits' "Hybrid Moments" is unexpectedly pretty, and the bouncy opening chords of "Unless I Can Kill" recall Neil Diamond's '60s hits. But then Oliveri's croaking vocals enter, demonstrating the disc's essential lesson: You can forge heavy metal with nothing more than acoustic guitar, bellowing vocals and a truckload of attitude.

"Death Acoustic" may not make Oliveri a lot of new fans, but it certainly makes its point.

-- Mark Jenkins

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