

**Sentenced**  
*Buried Alive*  
Century Media Records



Live recordings are not unusual these days, but one that captures the final show in a band's career are rare. *Buried Alive* is the final output of Sentenced, who ended their life in the industry with *The Funeral Album*, essentially their studio-recorded suicide note to the world. The concert features most of that album as well as older material, and allows their fans to pay last respects one final time before the casket is lowered into the ground. The intended purpose of this dark gothic metal band completed, its members have moved on. May they all Rest In Peace.



**Tristania**  
*Illumination*  
SPV Records

Norway's Tristania moves deeper into the gothic with their latest release by serving fans a quasi-Evanescence feel, just with far more depth and dramatics than that outfit provides. Brooding and dark, the textures both chill and warm the blood as Vibeke Stene provides siren melody and operatic styles to the sullen words of her male counterpart, Osten. "Destination Departure" and "Mercyside" are the album's most captivating tracks, and will surely enthrall you after only moments of hearing them. It's new ground for the band as they wisely blend doom into their signature sound. The dark never looked as bright till now.

**Edenbridge**  
*The Grand Design*  
Napalm Records



Angelic bombastic rock was how I first heard Edenbridge described, and it's pretty close to the mark with the lovely Sabine Edelsbacher—whose melodic and soaring vocals quickly bring you into this band's world. Musically masterminded by Lanvall (guitar/keys), they are adept at quality sounding hard rock that is rich in sound but not over-the-top enough to lose you with super technical displays. It's all about big vocals, harmonies and rich melodies from the

moment it begins. A surprise addition was the Sheena Easton track, "For Your Eyes Only," which comes from the popular James Bond movie of the same name.

**Fairyland**  
*The Fall Of An Empire*  
Napalm Records



Fans of The Mighty Rhapsody now have another contender in the world of symphonic score power metal with France's Fairyland. The whole CD sweeps with epic sounds and colors that enable the overall majesty to transport you to what feels like another land. Singer Maxime Leclercq bears uncanny vocal resemblance to the late, great Freddie Mercury, and that brought a sense of familiarity to the album. Power fanatics easily digest it because the musical techniques they display are top-notch. There are dizzying guitar riffs and drum patterns along with rich storytelling and detail, making it an interesting listen. Adventure awaits; care to join in?



**Various Artists**  
*Family Values Tour 2006*  
Firm Music

The FVT concert placed nu-metal titans Korn on the top billing with upstarts Stone Sour, 10 Years, Deftones and Flyleaf, along with more in support. It was a concert tour that answered the prayers of the angst ridden youth, who is the core demographic for most of these bands. The CD is but a taste of that is on the already-available DVD. Most of the bands presented here are far more exciting live, but nonetheless it's a decent package. I've just always felt that massive shows like these should be double disc presentations to best absorb the event.

**Realm**  
*Endless War*  
Metal Mind Productions



Originally released in 1990, this classic piece of molten thrash metal really gave fans of technical speed riffing and drums their fill. Sadly, the grunge movement was imminent at this time and the band would fade into obscurity as result. They became legendary and most known for their blistering rendition of the Beatles classic "Eleanor Rigby." The remasters from Metal Mind offer the chance to relive

the majesty of Realm once again, and serve remind us of a simpler time in metal, when the lines weren't as vague, and you either brought it or you sucked. Realm very clearly brought it.



**ZO2**  
*Ain't It Beautiful*  
Independent Artist

Every so often, you come across a band that reminds you of the simple pleasures of rock & roll and all of the magic that it possesses. This is the case with New York's ZO2, who are bringing back a sound that is generally lost by a number of today's bands—bands that are more concerned about genre labels than the actual music.

*Ain't It Beautiful* is the bands second independent release, and don't let the term indie sway you; the group comes from some truly inspirational foundations. Dave Z (the bassist) is also a member of The Trans-Siberian Orchestra, while brother Paulie and drummer Joe Cassata each have ample backgrounds from numerous working bands, which at times were busier than established industry 'professionals.' The group was also the opener for the entire run of dates for the KISS Rock The Nation tour. The CD follows up their debut *Tuesdays & Thursdays* with a similar theme of melodic hard rock that will appeal to all fans who loved what KISS and Aerosmith did in their earlier years.

But their sound is by no means retro, its just a skillful blend of the old meeting the new and showing just how fresh it can sound when you focus on the basic formulas. We can also add in the fact that they use three-part harmony vocals, and these guys give the listeners easily memorable choruses. Paulie has the kind of voice that many rock singers aspire to, he can be bluesy at times, passionate at others, and when it's called for, he can scream like a banshee. It is the kind of diversity you want in a frontman and he surely delivers on all fronts with numbers like "Get Up Now" and "If You See Kay." While these are two of the bands most inspired rock tunes, I'd also put "Comin' Home" and "Isolate" up there on the list—the best as each of them just took me away with the vibe that they brought.

The guys also show respect to the rock founders on "Get The Led Out," a number that uses some sweet Zeppelin feels and style. The album sounds fantastic and was produced and co-written by Bob Held. It's music that you will want to play loud, sing along to and memorize all at the same time. I'm convinced that bigger things await ZO2 and their fans. Anyone else want to come along?

—Ken Pierce

**Echo**  
**Eternity**  
*The Forgotten*  
Nuclear Blast

USA joins phonic p Eternity, a su stunning siren Musically, EC presence with time signature gressive and at times, and are not a clon newcomer to exciting and ir Francine Bou the lockers of some room fo



Founded by has a very origins, yet with "My Mind's Ey more accessib wide appeal. T and melodic, v Temptation an ferent and exc use of the dark atic, and when and harmonies wonderful met get. This is an gothic metal th

**Trail Of Tears**  
*Existence*  
Napalm Records

Trail Of Tears that takes t the convention drama and pow power metal. S every turn, the three lead singe They duel throu clean and opera trum, while the that are chock need of those s