

minutes. "Lawless Darkness" is essential to any fan of modern metal, and may well bring the essence of black metal to a whole new audience.

-- Todd Zachritz

My Life With The Thrill Kill Kult
-- *Sinister Whisperz*
(Rustblade)

★★★



Subtitled "The Wax Trax! Years (1987-1991)," this 13-song collection harkens back to the glory days of this Chicago-based glam/dance/industrial act. And as a tribute to Wax Trax! founding fathers Jim Nash and Dannie Flesher (R.I.P. gentlemen), it's a fitting set, keeping the group's trademark mix of horror/occult themes and kitschy glam-club disco. As it turns out,

"Sinister Whisperz" is not as much a compilation as a remix, from the early "And This Is What The Devil Does" or "Do You Fear For Your Child" to the more undeniably classic aggressive club sounds of "The Days Of Swine And Roses" and "Kooler Than Jesus."

And truth be told, TKK founders Marston Daley (aka Buzz McCoy) and Groovie Mann (Frankie Nardiello) have kept just about everything as I remember. Perhaps there are some minor tweaks here and remasterings there, but these cuts are oddly similar to the original tracks. Not that it's a bad thing, but fans expecting a modern mash-up of great Chicago dance cuts apply elsewhere. As a collection of the TKK's best tracks, this one hits the spots perfectly. The only thing missing is "Sex on Wheelz," but that's a minor complaint. Cooler than Jesus indeed, this one's a must-get for old-school, die-hard Wax Trax! fans like me.

-- Todd Zachritz

**Shonen Knife - Live At
Mohawk Place 2009**
(Good Charamel Records)

★★★★

Possibly the best-known (and most beloved) Japanese rock act on these shores, this Osaka-based trio have, for 25 years now, cornered the market on cute garage pop-punk. Yes, the three ladies of Shonen Knife sing songs about jellybeans, giant kitties, banana chips, and how much they



love chocobars. It may sound silly, but it's somehow endearing, and not forced or childish. And as cute as Shonen Knife may be, they prove that they have the musical chops to match. Imagine a collision of the Ramones with the Monkees, add some Hello Kitty, and you shouldn't be far off the mark. Shonen Knife's catchy, melodic, and energetic tunes are full of spunkiness and upbeat vibes. They are simply adorable, and their heavier songs kick ass, too. This live DVD was filmed in Buffalo on the band's 2009 tour, and shows a small but enthusiastic audience soaking in Osaka's favorite daughters' energy and infectious charm. It's well-filmed, the band were on fire, and this one should please just about anyone. I am left more a fan now than before, if that tells you anything!

-- Todd Zachritz