

Cover The Earth - Meat King 2009



When Capitol Records announced that the Meat Puppets and Meatmen would be releasing new CDs in the same year, I almost blew my gasket. "Are you crazy?" I asked those in charge. "Everybody's going to get them mixed up!" For example, is there anybody out there who can honestly tell the difference between **Up On The Sun** and **We're The Meatmen And You Still Suck!**? They're the *same exact album* but with a different cover! Oh, and don't even get me STARTED about the similarities between

Okay, that conceit wore thin a lot quicker than I anticipated. This is unfortunate, as I'm now seven paragraphs short with nothing to say.

Wait! Hold the smokes! I could talk about *the album!*

The Meatmen now consist of vocalist Tesco Vee, guitarist Big Dick Fontaine, bassist Stinky Penis, and drummer The Pit Viper. The three new members look like Hell's Angels, covered in full beards, greasy hair, denim and probably fleas though none show up in the band photos. Their music sounds less processed than the band's last incarnation, with Fontaine's guitar style seemingly based as much on '70s hard rock as on punk rock. But who knows for sure when the album is *ALL COVER TUNES!?!*

If you're rolling your ears in disappointment, you're not alone. When I heard the Meatmen were recording a new album, I too was hoping for a batch of hilarious new compositions with titles like "Semen Nose," "Woman With Large Breasts" and "Rim Job, And I'm Not Referring To A Car." But before you write off this CD as a wasted opportunity lost in a nightmare of poor planning, put it in your CD player and give it a spin.

But before you rip it out of the CD player and throw it out the window, try listening past the godawful first two songs, because it actually gets good after that!

First of all, you are *never* going to find another compilation or covers disc with a mix of artists like this: Swedish sweethearts ABBA... and the Pink Fairies!? Native American psych-rocker J.D. Blackfoot... and Saxon!? Modern honky-tonker Dallas Wayne.... and The Urinals!? Indeed, Tesco and his friends go against all expectations (as he himself points out in the liner notes, "What no T Rex? Slade? MC5? Jerry Reed?") to present the full spectrum and range of Mr. Vee's musical tastes. In 24 tracks, they hit upon not just the expected punk rock and '70s hard rock, but also '50s rock 'n roll, psych, new wave, glam, pop, heavy metal, funk, art-pop, post-punk, folk and country-western.

And obscure!? Well... to *ME*, anyway! Out of 23 covers (the 24th track is a disgusting fake commercial for a sex store), I can honestly say I'm only familiar with 6 original versions (Blue Oyster Cult's "ME 262," GG Allin's "Highest Power," Motorhead's "Vibrator," Fear's "I Love Livin' In The City," Jimmy Dean's "Big Bad John" and The Fugs' "Slum Goddess"), as well as 2 previous cover versions (Chris Spedding's "Motorbikin" as covered by Dee Dee Ramone, and Crawling Chaos' "Sex Machine" as covered by Unrest).

Another selling point is that Tesco prefaces several tracks with goofy skits and movie dialogue (*Motel Hell* and *Scum Of The Earth* in the first two songs alone!), as well as hiding funny 'Easter Eggs' in a few songs. Here, let me use bullet points so this paragraph doesn't get really long and unwieldy:

Goofy Pre-Song Skits Include:

- a Nazi flight checklist before "ME 262." Why Tesco sounds like a Mexican, I've no idea.
- GG Allin's "Highest Power" bookended by a Church open-mic night announcer. Before the song, she introduces 'Tesco Vee and his Rhythm Disciples'; afterwards, she concludes, "Okey-dokey, moving right along" before introducing Harold Peensapple's Last Supper Puppet Theatre
- A nerdy white man showing up for a party at The Temptations' "Psychedelic Shack" ("Um, hey -- 'bro!'")
- A bit of hilariously inept stage patter before Johnny Thunders' "One Track Mind" ("You kids all -- it's like I'm playin' to uh... fuckin' uh... Jerry -- Jerry Lewis' Parapulegics or whatever the fuck they're called. Ahh, suck my dick.")
- A disgusting beat poem before "Slum Goddess"

Funny 'Easter Eggs' Include:

- David Lee Roth "Runnin' With The Devil" screams during "ME 262" and Black Market Baby's "Downward Christian Soldiers"
- A snatch of Black Sabbath's "Iron Man" snuck into the piano solo of Jerry Lee Lewis' "Meatman"
- In "Psychedelic Shack," the slightly altered lyric "Take off your shoes, *shit* on the floor" (followed by a background cry of "Hey, that's my rug!")
- In "Highest Power," the new lyric "GG Allin's a dead son of a bitch/Now *I'M* the highest power!"

I'm not sure we need fart noises in both "Meatman" and 10cc's "Worst Band In The World," but what do I know about recording studios and their stringent regulations.

If this is indeed Tesco Vee singing all of these songs, then he shows an unexpected range of singing styles in imitating his musical heroes. In addition to his usual growly asshole delivery, he gives us a big Southern cowboy hat-wearing cowpoke in "Meatman," an anxious clipped-voice attack in Black Randy & The Metrosquad's "Loner With A Boner" and "I Slept In An Arcade," a filthy distorted scream in "Highest Power," mellow melodic vocals in "Worst Band In The World" and probably some other things too, although I suppose his pinched-nose voice is always pretty recognizable so ignore this paragraph.

This is a fun and diverse collection of great songs covered by a silly obscene man and his bearded sidekicks. If you're a Meatmen fan, you will likely enjoy it. Although, as I said, I only know about a third of the original versions, it doesn't seem to me that they ruin any of the songs except for "Slum Goddess" (not that that's ever been one of my favorite Fugs tracks in the first place, but the Fugs turn it into a terrible '60s soul song for some reason -- and it doesn't work!). My only problem is that some of Tesco's favorite songs are godawful. You could take the interchangeable boogie rockers "Meatman," "One Track Mind" and Roky Erickson's "Don't Shake Me Lucifer" -- as well as Thin Lizzy's godawful tuff-rocker "Bad Reputation" -- and throw 'em in a lake as far as I'm concerned. By the way, have you seen how fat and dumb-looking Jello Biafra has gotten recently? [Watch this video for proof!](#)

In other Meatmen news, Tesco Vee now has his own Bobble-Head doll! A company called Aggronautix has created funny little bobble-heads for both Tesco Vee and GG Allin, and is working on a two-headed Dwarves doll as well. As Tesco states in the press release, "As a toy collector of two decades, and classic bobble head collector, imagine just how geeked I became, when informed that yours truly would enter the pantheon of 'Throbblehead' punk rock losers, along with poopy soulmate GG Allin!" So if you like collecting silly things, get out \$30 and take a look at the [Tesco](#) and [GG](#) dolls right now!

In even FURTHER ADDITIONAL Meatmen news, they just reissued **Gonzo-Hate-Vibe!, Rock 'N Roll Juggernaut, We're The Meatmen And You Still Suck** and **Pope On A Rope**, each with several bonus tracks! Who do they think they are!?

Special forces in an armored car!?

Best,
Alice Cooper
An Album That Nobody Bought