

Masto-done

by **JOHNSON CUMMINS**



Atlanta's Mastodon are currently changing the landscape of metal. Along with bands like Tool and the Mars Volta, they've done their part to put prog rock (via scorching metal) back on the map. Mastodon's new record, *Crack The Skye*, can only be described as a behemoth in both vision and ferocity. Having already had my face melted twice seeing them live, the third time turned out to be the real charm when they sold out le National on Monday, May 4. They divided their set in two, first blitzkrieg-ing through the new record for an hour then ending with hits from *Leviathan* and *Blood Mountain*. The sonic barrage seemed endless as the complexity of the new record was pulled off with nary a bead of sweat on their brows, but somewhere along the line, the band seemed to drain the entire room's energy, as though we'd all been wrung through the prog-rock wringer. Not to say Mastodon aren't one of the most impressive and certainly the most innovative metal bands you are likely to see live, but this was a serious pummeling that just left most of us in drooling pools, muttering repeatedly, "That was really fuggin' heavy." Openers Kylesa were amazing—hell, they were even stupendous, and if metal's great white hopes didn't go on directly after them, they would've had us all toting a heap of their merch under our arms at the end of the night, but when your forced to slug it out in the decibel death match with Mastodon...

While I'm in review mode here, let me tug your sleeve about a film making its DVD debut this week—the amazing *Lik Your Idols*, directed by Angeliqe Bosio, documenting the Cinema of Transgression movement that was the epitome of underground film happening in the Lower East Side between 1985 and 1991. The two main filmmakers of that movement, Richard Kern and Nick Zedd, are interviewed at length, as are the fringe stragglers from the earlier downtown no wave scene and the Lower East Side punk scene, like Thurston Moore, Bruce la Bruce, Richard Hell, Swans' Jarboe and more. It's when Bosio looks beyond the films themselves and paints a picture of New York City in the early '80s by interviewing and displaying the fine art and performance art of Kern's actors like Joe Coleman, and the spoken-word of Lydia Lunch, as well as the music of the Bush Tetras, DNA, Teenage Jesus and the Jerks, 8-Eyed Spy and more that really helps flesh out Cinema of Transgression, as it was this cross-pollination of underground art that that helped them all take root in the cracked sidewalks of the Bowery and Alphabet City. Looking at Kern's and Zedd's shaky handheld Super 8 shorts, as well as Kern's photography, it seems glaringly clear how the mainstream has since co-opted their hyper-sexualized and often violent styles in fashion

magazines, advertisements and other media outlets. Highly recommended, and the bonus material including two of Zedd's earlier films, *Police State* and *War is Menstrual Envy*, makes this a necessity for any celluloid malcontent. If you want to dig a bit deeper, peep local film promoter cinema-abattoir.com for upcoming screenings of truly fucked-up and subversive films.

SPACE IS STILL THE PLACE...JONATHAN.CUMMINS@GMAIL.COM

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