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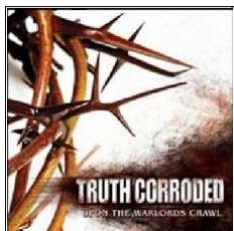
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Various - Aural Amphetamine (DVD)

Another thrash metal doco but with a specific focus

Thrash is back. Well, if you look around at a lot emerging bands such as Merciless Death, Bonded By Blood, Municipal Waste and Evile for example. Of course, The Haunted's first album from over a decade ago is pretty much a thrash masterpiece as well. In 2001, the Thrash Of The Titans festival occurred in San Francisco (California, U.S.A.) and all of a sudden, legendary thrash acts such as Exodus, Vio-lence and Death Angel got a new lease on life. Whilst some are on their second chance, others are still ploughing on as they've always done - I'm looking at you, Slayer.

But with the resurgence of interest in the thrash scene, we've seen docos such as Get Thrashed and Born In The Basement see the light of day which interview numerous figures from the scene back in the day as they discuss the scene, it's formative years, and eventual rise and fall from grace. Chalk up another in the thrash doco category with Aural Amphetamine - Metallica And The Dawn Of Thrash, and that's just what it is all about.



Of all the thrash acts from the scene back in the day, there's no denying Metallica's rise to dominance and throughout this doco, that is exactly what is discussed hand in hand with the emergence of the thrash scene that they were a significant part of. The first half of the doco covers the roots of metal, the rise of the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal (N.W.O.B.H.M.) and it's impact on Metallica drummer Lars Ulrich, the band's influences, the cross pollination (for want of a better phrase) between punk and metal and the significance of the San Francisco (California, U.S.A.) Bay Area. The interviews with former RIP Magazine editor Lonn Friend, legendary Metallica (amongst others) photographer and one time D.R.I. bassist Harold 'O', Diamond Head guitarist Brian Tatler as well as others provide their views on the scene, it's history, it's build up (including an interesting perspective that Venom were responsible in some way for thrash) and everything that occurred that paved the way for Metallica.

Continuing the discussions with the aforementioned people, the second part of the doco really covers from the release of 1983's Kill 'Em All through to 1986's Master Of Puppets. Along the way, topics such as the differences between Metallica, Slayer, Motorhead and Venom, the significance of Hetfield's rhythm technique on the thrash scene, the impact of Kill 'Em All upon it's release, the significance Cliff Burton, right through to the quantum jumps between Kill 'Em All to Ride The Lightning to Master Of Puppets, the "big four of thrash" (Metallica, Megadeth, Slayer and Anthrax), and ever so briefly, the demise of the scene. The likes of Chris Kontos (ex-Machine Head, Attitude Adjustment), Sean Smithson (Sacrilege B.C.), Aaron Jellum (Laaz Rockit), Chris Poland (ex-Megadeth) and Dave Edwardson (Vocalist, Neurosis) chip in their two cents worth in what is a generally cohesive time line, although it's odd that what the narrator calls "their definitive album" (1986's Master Of Puppets) takes most of the doco to actually get to and then, it is only brief discussion of the band's legendary recording.

Aural Amphetamine (which is a terrible title in itself) is decent enough viewing. The perspectives and impact of Metallica's earliest years and recordings are captured in an interesting way through a reasonable cross section of identities sharing their experiences, stories and knowledge. There isn't a great deal of re-watchability with this one and it is, as the title suggests, really for Metallica fans more than anyone. Strictly for the die hards who have to have it all.



(MVD Entertainment Group)

Added: June 27th 2008

Reviewer: Simon Milburn

Score: ★★★★★☆☆☆☆☆

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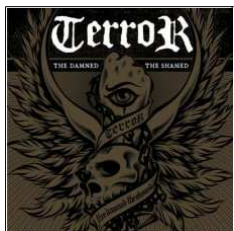
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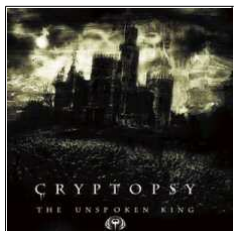
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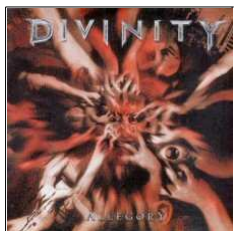
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