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Trendy heavy metal OK for now

Guns 'N Roses "Appetite For Destruction" Geffen Records

If all metal was this good, I'd probably start liking the stuff.

Having admitted that, I also have to admit that I'm hesitant to admit I like this album. And believe me, my hesitation stems not from the critic's constant irrational fear that somebody "cool" will see that I really like heavy metal after all and will dismiss me as a dork. Five of the six people who read this already think I'm a dork, (and three of them are right).

No, the reason I'm so loathe to admit I really like Guns 'N Roses' new album is this — metal is becoming *trendy*. Suddenly, it's hip to like the horrid sludgy bits of rock and roll. Obviously, blame MTV for shoving it in our faces all day 'til everyone's resistance eventually wears down, but that isn't even what I'm really mad about. Not at the moment at least, because everyone in their right mind expects a diet of 90 percent swill from the ceaseless hype kitchens of the Meaningless Trendy Void channel.

No, what's most bothersome to me is the way the *critics* have suddenly started slobbering over it. You remember the *critics* — those self-righteous maggots (self included, of course) who are always telling you not only what you have to listen to, but

what you have to *like* for God's sake, and you (we) only tolerate them (us) to find out what new albums are coming out.

So anyway, the esteemed learned scribes of rock, who've been castigating the more pasta-minded selections of pseudo-macho teenager's aural impulses for most of their wasted lives (How's that novel coming along, Byron?), now seem to be falling all over themselves in their plight to embrace all the posturing, brain-dead guano that sent them scrambling to the import racks in the first place.

Geoff McMurtry



MTV can't take all the blame for rave reviews of each week's leather-clad "Up with a bullet, down without a trace" champion in Spin, Rolling Stone, and all the other "America's only rock and roll" magazines. These magazines are run by consenting adults, and generally, they have consenting adults writing for them. If these consenting adults still can't figure out what to write about because

MTV has added their brains (a distinct possibility), well, maybe Tipper Gore was right after all.

It's gotten to the point that reading music magazines these days is like going to "Rocky Horror" and hearing that guy in the crowd — he's always there — that same guy who always yells, "What, Megadeth again?!"

So anyway, I kinda like Guns N' Roses new album, but I don't want to contribute to anybody's trend — especially one as nefariously backward-thinking as this. As if the usual skull-covered album jacket wasn't enough, I should've been warned by seeing the usual "Next Big Thing" stories in various magazines from Spin and the Stone to Family House-keeping Journal, complete with sneering leather-panted photos with lots of strategically placed beer bottles.

Yeah, I know, I should probably just let go and admit I like it, and not try to think too much about why I like it, but just leave it at that. After all, it isn't math, and it isn't of earth-shattering importance, it's only rock and roll.

But I like it. Maybe I've been cursed with a good upbringing, but I feel this weighty responsibility to use even the miniscule influence and authority I have for purposes of good — you know, to fight crime, and to strive for truth, justice and the liberating of music from boastful adenoidal whining.

Speaking of backward-thinking, there's this one other major critical trend going on right now that has me even more worried, and even though it hardly applies here, I may as well mention it since I'm already mired in enough self-indulgent pontification as it is. What's that? Cover stories in aforementioned national magazines about some ridiculous made-for-TV concoction called Latin HipHop, a.k.a. teenage disco with a beatbox?

No-o-o-o, let's just ignore that, 'cause it'll go away. What I'm talking about is that "Weren't the 1970s Fun?" rotten apple that keeps getting tossed in the barrel by same aforementioned music magazines and dragged out of the woodwork by otherwise rational bands.

The '70s, the obvious successor to the '50s and '60s in our current decade's Retro-Hell Series (I suspect Silver Eagle Records is somehow financing the whole thing), were not "fun." As I recall, the closest thing to "fun" indigenous to the times themselves that the '70s had to offer was a choice between staying home to watch "Chips" or going to an alleged "party" in a "friend's" basement, which consisted of "dancing" to the likes of Styx's "Lorelei" while wearing polyester, sweating nervously and hoping either Brenda Nelson or Tracy Stromquist would smile at me without noticing how much I was staring at them. If the evening was truly successful (as in transcending the dreams of mere mortals and exploring into the next greater realm of consciousness reserved only to those who've achieved a higher plane of intellectual being), one of them would ask me to dance with them during "Theme from Charlie's Angels."

As I also recall, the weekend often started by having the choice made for me when my stepfather would ground me for having the insolence to ques-

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