

When in Rome, Face Riff the Romans

Written by Jeff Tuttle

Thursday, 01 July 2010 13:15



When it comes to the arts, Europeans have always had the distinguished honor of being some of the most supportive enthusiasts this guitarist has ever encountered. While the world may be experiencing somewhat of an artistic recession (more on this later), the other side of the Atlantic refuses to relinquish its support of film and music. With the French leading the way in the world of horror with titles like MARTYRS, INSIDE, FRONTIERS and many others, and the great European tradition of summer Heavy Metal music festivals still pushing onward with great success despite the steady decline of record sales, it's no wonder why I'm finding myself more and more immersed in places and cultures that are foreign to me.

Recently, The Dillinger Escape Plan had an opportunity to travel across Europe and destroy a handful of these festival stages and spend some time exploring different cities. For me, this always means following blood trails to out of the way horror goldmines. Our first day off found us in London, England. When you're as close to the birthplace of Heavy Metal as you are in London, you can bet that the horror is not too far away. Within minutes of exiting the Tube (that's the subway for us Yanks), I sniffed out a place called The Vintage Magazine Co. (39-43 Brewer Street, Soho London, W1R 9UD) and began sifting through the rubble of dog-eared rags until I hit the megaload. I was like a kid on Christmas when I found a stack of horror 'zine back issues and had a grin from ear to ear as I flipped through the faded pages one by one. While my heart wanted to adopt all the FANGORIAS and others like rectangular bastard children, my bank account felt differently; so I decided to choose only one. I felt that since it is no longer published, I should pick up a copy of the original GOREZONE (#6 with the INTRUDER cover story). A few quid later (or money, for us freedom lovers), and I was off to have a spot of tea with that old Fango spinoff mag.



Old 'zines are like high school yearbooks and the films within serve as your friends. They help us remember the good times, like watching BLOODSUCKING NAZI ZOMBIES (a.k.a. OASIS OF THE LIVING DEAD) at every sleepover as a kid (yes, I really did that), but also help us remember the bad, like watching BLOODSUCKING NAZI ZOMBIES as an adult. Either way, I will always argue that having something tangible to hold in your hands will forever outweigh

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digital copies.

I spoke earlier about an artistic recession and, in a previous blog, argued the pros/cons of the digital revolution. While the digital age has brought with it countless advantages and a great deal of convenience, I would like to say that these advantages and conveniences are taking the very fun out of being a geek. The moment file sharing became a means to an end for everyone in the world, music and movies died a bit on the inside. All those dorks who would toil in dirty secondhand stores for hours to find original Metallica vinyls, or an uncut copy of ARMY OF DARKNESS with the alternate ending, could now get online, click a button, and have any movie or record ever made. Convenient? Yes, but at a very steep cost. When movies and music are viewed as less of a commodity and more of thing you keep on your hard drive, artistic recession sets in.

Ironically, this recession served as the inspiration for OPTION PARALYSIS, The Dillinger Escape Plan's latest record. Many of the themes on the record deal with the information age diminishing the need to leave the house to interact with others. While the digital revolution may allow for a greater forum in which to operate, it fails to provide any genuine human experience—actually seeking out things in the real world. I really hate making an argument that is pro-capitalism, but in this case I really feel that the worth of movies and music fell when people figured out that they didn't need to spend money to be entertained.

I'm not going to act like Hollywood didn't deserve a collective kick in the ass for its years of reckless spending that resulted in the astronomical costs of CDs and DVDs, but as viewers and listeners, we need to realize that we are part of a perpetual motion machine. Hollywood needs us to continue buying and we need Hollywood to continue selling. The laws of supply and demand are very simple. The less there is of something, the more people want it. Maybe I'm crazy, but I'd rather live in a world where CDs and DVDs are like gasoline in the world of MAD MAX and all torrent sites died in a bloody THUNDERDOME battle against Master-Blaster.

In lieu of the postapocalyptic universe, I will continue to scavenge bargain bins and let my nerd flag fly. I have always felt that being a collector brings you closer to the art that you search for. Searching for that something makes that something part of you. I will always remember the day I found GOREZONE #6. I will always remember eating at the vegetarian buffet with my wife and band members just prior to finding the Vintage Magazine Co. I will remember the incessant English rain and the smell of the Tube. What I have forgotten are all the titles on my hard drive that were given to me that I have never watched or listened to. With all of its advantages and convenience, downloading may be able to create more space on a shelf, but it certainly will never be able to create the lasting memories of a collector.

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