

**mykal xul** "jonhson county line" (Gulcher) Beautiful filth! Sublimely offensive.

**Yahowa 13** "Sonic Portation" (Prophase) I guess I would call the LaBelle reunion album the comeback of the year — that record is awesome — but as far as the most surprisingly solid, super unexpected reunion record it has to be this one. The story of father Yod and his Source Family commune/psychedelic band the Ya Ho Wa 13 has been told in a remarkable book, tons of reissues, and the amazing Drag City release of their lost rock musical, so I won't recount it here. But I will say that in the wake of Yod's hang gliding death in 1975 most 'cults' would gob the way of the dodo, but obviously he tapped into something, because over thirty years later the spirit of his teachings (not to mention the music that sprouted from it) is still somewhere in the ether as members of the original musical group have reconnected and are making new original sounds that are seriously solid, and far more interesting than most of the so called "freak folk" stuff out there. The two musical secrets of these rocking, chanting, noisemakers is that some members had a solid foundation in musicianship and pop songwriting and that all created, and still create, music with utter conviction.

**Yarn** "Empty Pockets" (Ardsley) No yawns from yarn, as this joyful (even on a song called "I Feel So Low"), mandolincious Americana makes you want to square dance with your dog.

**The Young** "4 Songs" (Criminal I.Q., criminaliq.com) Should be called The Stung, because they sound like bees just attacked them. They even get their guitar to sound like bagpipe, which we all know attracts angry bees. This is a seriously great record.

**The Younger Lovers** "Newest Romantic"/"California Soul" (Retard Disco, retarddisco.com) I thought this was going to be good, that's kind of a positive thing to say, right?

**Your Gracious Host** (myspace.com/yourgracioushost) If you festishize the "pop" (and I mean the power kind) you may not be able to handle the pop-gasm of auto-erotic asphyxiation-level you will get from this masterpiece.

**Michael Zapruder** "Dragon Chinese Cocktail Horoscope" (Sidecho.com) Zapruder comes off like a storytelling monk whose precious, almost mystical musical tales seem to contain lessons and morals beyond mere mortal comprehension. So clearly, with my sub-human capabilities, this is above me, but I am very entranced and intrigued.

**Aaron Zimmer** "Live Wires" (aaronzimmer.com) The A to Z of indie-rock awesomeness.

## TV/FILM/VIDEO

**ANTI SEEN** "Destructo Vision" (Steel Cage) This video collects a handful of brutal concerts in the 2000s by a band that is sort of hard to believe is real. If you were creating an imaginary evil fantasy hard rocking band they would look and sound exactly like this, and sing about wrestling, and cover the Ramones, and cover the stage with blood and fire. Behind their ragged beards and husky frames and Confederate flags ANTI SEEN pretends to be meatheads, but obviously Jeff is a pretty clever dude...burning a washboard in a Southern parody of Hendrix' guitar is actually a pretty sophisticated joke. But then again, do smart guys jump off drum risers onto burning folding tables covered with thumbtacks? Apparently, YES! But I will not vouch for the fan who cuts his head open when the crowd becomes frustrated that Jeff has not juiced (bled intentionally...which he does anyhow ten minutes

later). Though these are raw videos shot with one or two camcorders each, they are sort of in the perfect format to appreciate the vibe of the shows. When the cameraman's attention is diverted from the stage to shoot footage of a beautiful woman on the ground either kicking someone's ass, or having her ass kicked, he's only reflecting what everyone else wanted to look at as well. And as one dude standing next to the camera says, summing up the mood of an ANTI SEEN audio assault, "... nothing wrong with partying..."

**The Beach Boys and the Satan** DVD (ABC Entertainment) This German documentary from 1997 strives to define the surf/California culture that set the stage for the rise of the Beach Boys, and then explore the connections between Brian Wilson's brilliance and the terror of the Manson Family. It actually doesn't do that good a job, in a sense that it doesn't tell you anything even a casual fan doesn't know and it really does not go into depth with anything. *BUT* do they ever talk to the right people! This is worth seeking out just to hear Kim Fowley sing his commentary, first a tune about what California was like in 1967, and then his musical love letter to Manson. Also Dick Dale (as well as a number of surf music legends) tell tales of wave riding and pre-Beach Boys instrumental music magic, artist Mike Kelley (whose music side in never mentioned) discusses hating the Beach Boys, the late Greg Shaw sets the scene, David from Pere Ubu is interviewed for some reason, Don Was demonstrates how embarrassing white people with dreadlocks can look, and Brian Wilson tickles the ivories. Though no one says anything you don't know, it sure is fun to see awesome people yabbering.

**The Beatles** "Magical Mystery Tour Memories" (MVD) Surprisingly good Beatles documentary cobbled together to make a feature around some great looking home movie footage shot of the boys as they filmed their *Magical Mystery Tour* movie. Though, with a few exceptions (Spencer Davis, Neil Innes, Beatles tour manager Tony Bramwell) they are just talking to regular British folks who happened upon the filming, that's fine. The kids who ran up to the sets and the blokes in the pub were used by the Beatles as scenery and supporting cast in their improvisational trippy made-for-TV movie, so their charming if inconsequential memories are pretty valid. Most importantly, this film is much easier to watch than the actual *Magical Mystery Tour*.



**Black Metal Satanica** DVD (MVD) For anyone interested in the dark, evil history of back metal, going back to ancient Viking days (thank you people dressed up for the Viking equivalent of a renaissance

fair) to today's black metal scene (including Shining, a suicide-themed black metal band that hands out razor blades at shows) can get a clear, intelligent history from this documentary, that interviews numerous very articulate, good-at-English black metalers who describe their anti-Christian corpse paint shenanigans very clearly. The biggest knock on this film (other than it being light on actual music) is that not only could you get this story by reading the books on the subject, but probably by spending the film's running time on the internet — many of the archival images in this are taken from the internet. That said, it's nice to hear the Satanists (and Viking worshippers who reject the concept of Satan) speak for themselves.

**Chocolate News** (Comedy Central) I will give David Alan Grier credit for making you root for him and like him and think he's a funny guy even when what he produces isn't quite funny. Usually when you try to describe a skit to someone who hasn't seen it it's just not funny, but almost all of these skits sound like they were better than they actually were when you tell someone about them.

**A Colbert Christmas** (Comedy Central) Genuinely good music (Mr. Colbert apparently loves to sing — the choral harmonies on the Elvis Costello/John Legend/Feist/Willie Nelson/Toby Keith/Colbert "What's So Funny About Peace Love and Understanding" are heavenly), really funny jokes (Keith's "War On Christmas" song is a howler) and a love for all that's skewed about celebrity Christmas specials (look for the numerous awkward jump cuts) make this the new "Ebbie!" You know, the 1995 Susan Lucci "Christmas Carol" update! Humbugged me!

**Composing the Beatles Songbook 1966-1970** (MVD) Seriously, do you want to hear Christgau, Ian DeCurtis, and British journalists and musicians pontificate on the arty Beatles? Ecch.

**Desperately Seeking Paul McCartney** DVD (MVD) Fucking awful! Ruth Anison was a young reporter who interviewed the Beatles briefly in L.A., resulting in a joke marriage proposal from The Cute One. The fact that an awesome still and incredibly awesome film footage of this exists is the basis of this staged, fake documentary, where everyone (including Ruth) is completely incapable of acting like themselves. Which could be OK, plenty of heavily staged reality shows have people acting completely fake and stiff, but at least they have some charms, but this insulting film has no one displaying any charm. And no one is even majestically charmless, like Gene Simmons on his reality show. But one can't really blame non-actors for not being able to act (or act like they are not acting), but what is amazing is that this won an award at a "mockumentary" festival called Mock Fest, which means that Mock Fest must be the absolute worst festival in the world. Do not attend it!

**Ed Wood's Devil Girls, Ed Wood's The Vampire's Tomb, I Was A Teenage Beatnik!** (youtube.com/user/terminalpictures) Somebody once told me, "You're only as good as your influences," and we're talking good influences from "bad" movies...the kind of modern trash the little puppets on *Mystery Science Theatre 3000* would have a field day taking the piss out of. If you've only watched the original Psychotronic films, interrupted by jokes and gags and incessant talking (that you could have gone to a REAL movie theatre to hear), you've missed out. Filmmaker Andre Perkowski is going against the grain, in more ways than one. His films seek not only to take the supposedly late, lamentable "Exploitation" genre, into the 21st century, but they jump from one form of cinematography to another. It isn't perfect, and it's not always easy to take.