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REVIEW

Music DVD Review: Buckethead/The Deli Creeps/Jas Obrecht - *Young Buckethead 1 & 2*

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Have you ever noticed how the arts seems to be a magnet for the eccentric and odd?

Perhaps no other field, except the applied sciences, has such a disproportionate representation of people who walk to the beat of a drummer that other people just don't hear. Of course it's debatable as to which caused which; do you have to be a bit odd in the first place to be an artist or a scientist, or is it something about them that turns people a little strange?

Whatever the reason there can be no denying that the arts have had their share of unique individuals. Usually the more flamboyant have been among those who are the performers, although that's not a hard and fast rule as there have been any number of outrageous poets and painters. A lot has been said about insecurity causing people to create a "mask" in order to hide their true selves from the audience when they go on stage.

Actors do that as a matter of course every time they go on stage as that is their job, but musicians aren't under the same the obligation to provide their audiences with that kind of performance. While some musical performers will create personas that give them the strength to stand in front of audiences and bare their souls, the majority of them won't go the full distance and create completely different characters. Most people who go see bands play don't expect the band to do anything other than play music.

So when the lead guitar player comes onto stage wearing a mask and a Kentucky Fried Chicken bucket on his head he tends to stand out from the rest of the band, and other guitar players in general. [Buckethead](#) is easily one of the most instantly recognizable guitar players out there right now because that's exactly how he appears on stage. But the bucket and the mask are far more than just a means of disguise; they are the physical trappings of a person with a history and a life beyond the stage.



Now I've begun to hear rumours that some guy named Brian Carol - or something like that - has begun claiming that he is actually Buckethead, but one needs only go to [Bucketheadland](#) to find the true history of the guitar hero. There you can read the heartrending tale of his orphanage and upbringing by friendly chickens and the coop that he called home.

You can also read about his quest to find musical fulfillment by playing with bands like Guns & Roses, Primus, and his projects with Viggo Mortensen. But it was only recently, with the release of *Enter The Chicken* that he released a recording made up entirely of his own compositions.

However his early days in music have been shrouded in some mystery. Where did he hone his musical skills? Is there some Svengali lurking in the background that discovered the brave young man and guided him through his transition from coop to stage. Well the answers are now available on two DVDs of previously unreleased home movies made by and about Buckethead.

Originally shot on Super 8 film but now digitally remastered, [Young Buckethead 1 & 2](#) provide valuable information that gives us insight into the creative process that has allowed Buckethead to develop into what he has become today.

Jas Obrecht was an editor for *Guitar Player* magazine in 1988 when a sixteen-year-old Buckethead dropped off a demo tape for him. To say he was blown away was putting it mildly and he pushed Buckethead to continue to work on his guitar playing. In 1990 Buckethead asked Jas if he would film his band the Deli Creeps during a couple of their forth coming gigs. It's those films that provided the footage of the Deli Creeps in concert on *Young Buckethead 1 & 2*. Although the sound or video quality aren't the greatest because of the original medium, they are good enough to give a really good impression of what the Deli Creeps were all about.

The first thing you realize watching them is that they were as much performance art as they were a rock and roll band. The action

The music itself is loud and discordant, but at the same time there is a purpose to the madness of the Deli Creeps. The manner of their appearance - dressed in clothes that could be worn by deranged clerks at a delicatessen where you wouldn't really trust the provenance of any of the meat; it might taste like chicken but who knows how many legs it may have had to begin with? It's not a political agenda, as in anti meat etc, rather it felt like wandering into some deranged version of our own world or maybe a deli run by the boys from *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, which I guess amounts to the same thing.



Jas Obrecht describes in his liner notes some of Buckethead's creative process which included continuous playing of *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* while working out various techniques on guitar. He's a reliable source of information as far as this goes because Buckethead had moved into his basement in 1991. It was during this time that the impromptu elements of the DVD were filmed. These include a wonderful, intimate concert he gave for his brothers and sisters at a backyard get together, an interview with Buckethead in a park, and a seriously deranged monologue performed by Jas while wearing a milk carton over his head and Buckethead providing suitably strange atmospheric keyboard music.

Obviously there are problems with both the sound and the video on these tapes; Super 8 was not a great medium for recording anything, let alone music. But all things considered this is still a valuable record of the early days of Buckethead's career. Not only does it give a great opportunity to hear him beginning to define his style of guitar playing, it also gives us an indication of his interest in creating the atmospheric music that he has since made to underscore Viggo Mortensen's poetry on CDs produced by [Perceval Press](#)

Young Buckethead 1 & 2 are a must have for fans of Buckethead and fans of the absurd in general. Not only does it provide some great opportunities to see Buckethead perform solo, we are privy to some of his early experimentation with conceptual performance with his first band The Deli Creeps. On these two discs we are given the rare opportunity to watch a myth being created before our eyes.

Once there was a young man raised by chickens in a rundown coop from the bad side of the field who dreamed of bringing his music to the people of America. Buckethead is now regarded as one of the most innovative and exciting guitar players in the world. With a dream in his heart, a mask on his face, and an empty chicken bucket on his head, Buckethead is a living embodiment of the American Dream come true.

Watch *Young Buckethead 1 & 2* to see the emergence of a star and you will end up having your belief in dreams and the American way restored - or not. Either way this is brilliant stuff that shouldn't be missed for anything



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Comments

