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Live Reviews

Sepultura / Stampin' Ground

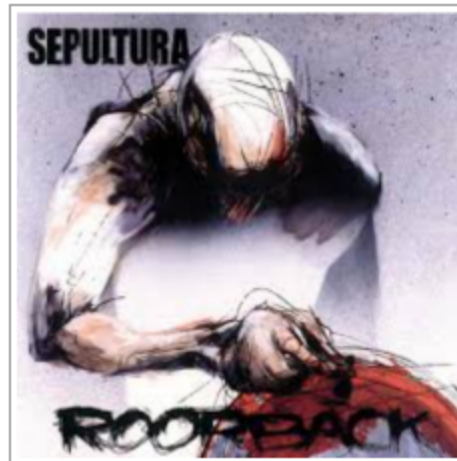
London Astoria - July 13 2003

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There's a low hum passing around the auditorium, it transcends the humidity and white noise. Like a courteous understanding of what's to follow, it waits ready to leap. Right on cue a collective unit of bodies erupt as support act Stampin' Ground leaves the stage. Limbs, minds and vocal chords suitably exercised, the mass is ready for the gods of Brazilian metal.



Life after Max Cavalera has been debatable for Sepultura, who replaced their founder's politics for Derrick Green. Two albums later, onlookers might say those rather large and daunting shoes have proved difficult to fill. With an alleged loss of direction, the task has been to prove that it's time to move on from the Sepultura of old.



For many, band and fans alike, this reunion is a poignant reminder of what can be achieved. The crowd is champing at the bit to sample the magic. Intro complete, the first meaty offering is a raw, bloody helping of new album, Roorback's freshest cut. Met with salivating approval, Corrupted is an apt precursor for the lengthy gig which follows. Appetites whetted, audio-visual assault under way, with more than just a point to prove, an over charismatic, Green adds his growling vocal commentary any chance he can get.

The throng accommodates chants of, "let's keep this shit going," and rhetoric about how much the Sepultura appreciate the London crowd. How much? Well, "36 fucking hours on a bus from Spain." Nodding, kicking, tapping the Astoria is definitely feeling the love, albeit a crowd surfing boot in the face.

Anyone tall enough to see beyond the tattooed torsos; gets treated to prime hair thrasher, Andreas Kisser, a human metronome on a mission. Punishing guitars, punctuated by Green's screech and Igor Cavalera's unrivalled percussion comes next - this prowess felt on the anthemic, Propaganda.

Apes of God, and More of the Same, deliver the Sepultura message like nothing ever changed. The reputation of the band remains intact. With two encores to offer, Mind War, dedicated to all those fighting battles in the head is well received, back to back with the classic, We Who Are Not As Others.



Judging from healthy crowd response, the technicolour silhouettes of Green and Kisser have, despite being a long set, done the Astoria proud. A few early seeds from Roots and Morbid Visions, a U2 cover and bloodletting from Leech, set the final scene. Maybe the battering ram that is Come Back Alive; will be the metaphor for a Sepultura-reborn. The boys, strike that; the Men from Brazil have come up with the goods.

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