Monstrous metal with Gwar

**MUSIC PREVIEW**

**Gwar**

**WHERE**

Edmonton Event Centre

**TIME**

Friday, Nov. 4 at 7 p.m.

**WEB**

<ticketmaster.ca>

**Contact**

JULIE SMITH

On the phone with the lead singer of Gwar, it's hard to know whether it's a human or an alien you're communicating with. While Dave Brockie is the man behind the outrageous thrash metal mask, he's far better known by his moniker Oderus Urungus—a ruthless intergalactic metal barbarian with a mouth to match his shocking exterior, and a role Brockie adores with unabashed glee.

"You got Dave here," Brockie begins cheerfully. "And you got Oderus. Dave is boring. Actually, Dave is dead. I ate him— I needed food for this tour coming up."

Gwar is armed for their new tour with a deep catalogue of dark music and demented stage theatrics that reaches all the way back to 1984. But with almost three decades of experience and 13 albums under the band's belt, the collective Gwar imagination still never runs out of ideas for bizarre creatures to include in the mists that surrounds the group. As they prepare for their upcoming stint on the road on the World Maggot tour, expect the usual: program of incinerating celebrations and enraging violent punishments on the so-called "Gwar slaves," but don't underestimate the band's willingness to take their onstage antics to new levels.

"Right now the Gwar slaves are building the great harness for the World Maggot. We don't want it to just be roaming around onstage. We're playing a fucking metal show here; you can't just have a few long maggot rolling around in every song," Brockie says. "That'll make sense difficult. I know that. But we do want to unleash it at some point, so the slaves are working on some chains and an elaborate structure of iron and steel and rock that will unfortunately collapse at some point and kill a large portion of the audience."

"The reason we like the maggots is we like to ride them through outer space," he continues. "And they don't like it at all, so it's difficult. It's a sport. I've usually found beating them into submission works... You establish a relationship, much like you would with a pony. The maggot is like a pony to me, and I'm like a little girl—a little girl with a giant dick who has sex with her pony."

While the band ups the gory ante in their live show, they've also dedicated to the evolution of their sound. Brockie describes the band's latest album Bloody Pit of Horror as the group's heaviest music yet. This is a deliberate direction for Gwar, making an effort to combine a hard metallic edge with the over-the-top humour of their live shows.

"Thematically and musically we've gotten a lot darker," Brockie acknowledges, stopping to speak seriously. "The problem is we get out there and play live, and we're just funny guys. We can't help it. And the more serious we are, the more funny we become."

"But what you call a show is just my typical feeding stimul", he says, jumping back into the role of Oderus. "I go there; the crowd is gathered making noise, creatures are drawn like maggots to an open wound, many die, I feed, pass out for a couple hours, walk to the next city and it all begins again. It still retains its hatred after all these blood-drenched years."

With the alien invasion of Gwar nearing its 20th anniversary, the band doesn't appear to be slowing down any time soon. And Brockie's own outlandish alter ego is perfectly willing to stay exactly where he is.

"The crack is the best part about earth," Brockie says without a second of hesitation. "And metal—crack and metal. If you could only have two things in the world, why wouldn't they be crack and metal?"

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**ARTS & CULTURE REVIEW**

**Darlings of Chelsea**

Panic Is Worse than the Emergency

Independent

darlingsofchelsea.net

**Andrew Jeffrey**

ARTS & CULTURE STAFF • ANDREW.JEFFREY

Not every band tries to make meaningful statements with their work. Not every band tries to do something truly unheard of with a crazy new concept. Some bands, like Darlings of Chelsea, just want to play old-fashioned, simple rock 'n' roll music.

Panic Is Worse than the Emergency doesn't attempt to be anything more than a fun rock record. The lyrics offer the usual messages of overcoming adversity — not necessarily anything new or special that hasn't been said better by someone else. But the album is still a solid, with music that only improves as it goes on. The first couple songs are the worst offendi-