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Hi guys, here's the Iron Maiden review. These guys rock. Hope yr all ok.
Talk soon, Big P

Iron Maiden: Masters of Metal & Marketing

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Athens, Terravibe Park, Malakasa

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The march into Terravibe Park in Malakasa began a couple of kilometers before the concert stage. All parking areas were completely-way-ultra past full and people just left their rides on the side of the road and trekked into the massive, open-air venue. Legions, I am not exaggerating, legions of black t-shirted, hairy-armed, sonically-twisted, velocity metal devotees marched like soldier ants to the gathering place where the ultimate, pan-galactic champion British metal band, Iron Maiden, would perform live.

As I walked past scores of hot dog, soft drink and t-shirt vendors I saw what it means to have *lots* of t-shirt logos. I thought Metallica had a lot of t-shirt designs in their collection, but no, I was wrong on that subject. Graphic depictions and caricatures of Eddie, Iron Maiden's always-freaking-out, skeletal-ghoul, homicidal mascot were everywhere. The guignolesque cartoonish character is one of the most successful marketing tools in the history of public entertainment. The punky, sadistic menace is the ideal personification of adolescent rage, confusion and inarticulation. He's always lashing-out at, or being tormented by, something. This condition is a timeless teenage feeling. Ergo, Eddie looks great in any historical motif they wish to stick him in. From ancient Egypt to remote futuristic space station, he's always at home. And baby, the kids love him for it.

However, all the marketing savvy on earth won't help you if the band doesn't have good material and play exciting shows. Iron Maiden's three-guitar melodic anthems are simultaneously engaging, thrilling and exciting as hell to hear and watch. They are one of the finest bands I've ever seen perform live and they deserve every accolade the get from critics and fans alike.

The show opened with the Lauren Harris band. The four-piece group played a slick set of fun, fast, metal-pop in the vein of bands like Kix/Winger/Face Dancer. Their showpiece song, "Steal Your Fire," featured excellent guitar work seemingly inspired by Scorpions and UFO guitar greats Rudolph and Michael Schenkar.

When Iron Maiden at last mounted the stage, the crowd reaction was something akin to the reception which would be given to the second coming of mankind's Savior. The first fifty rows of people before the hardboards were an undulating, lathering, psychotic mass of frantic flesh, hooting in ecstasy before their guitar paragons. The remainder of the audience was only about 90% that enthusiastic for the band.

The split-level stage was designed in ancient Egyptian motif with large statues of Anubis, glowing-eyed sarcophagae, hieroglyphic skrimis, and skeletons in pharaonic clothing placed around the playing area. While performing their epic crunch-marches and romps, columns of fire, dry ice fog and low altitude fireworks augmented their unbelievably ear-catching pieces.

Bruce Dickinson, arguably the finest frontman in metal, dashed about the stage wailing his honeyed voice like a joyfully demented opera singer. He joins the select ranks of singers like Freddie Mercury, Jon

Anderson and Ronnie James Dio who can trumpet a vocal note to its absolute limit while still having it remain crystal clear and perfectly in tune with the piece being performed.

Dave Murray, the most animated guitarist in rock after AC/DC's Angus Young, danced around the stage like a very young spider who has been dropped onto a very hot waffle iron. The loose-jointed guitar player performed breakdance-kabuki style physical moves while slinging his guitar over his shoulder in 360 degree spirals while not missing a note of any song.

Steve Harris loomed over his bass guitar like Viktor Frankenstein and guided the band through their standards "Revelation," "Number of the Beast," "Moonchild," "Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner," and "Fear of the Dark." After their final song the crowd exited the park with the collective, glazed look of a religious zealot who has just exited the holy land on celebration day.

Side note: out of the thousands of black t-shirts worn by the crowd which had mutation band logos, anti-social one-liners and general goofball stuff printed on them, my favorite one had a depiction of an M-16 assault rifle and the phrase "Zombie Repellant" spelled underneath it.