

Motley Crue, A Double-shot of the Arty Stuff, and Pussycat Dolls Mental Profile Update

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OK guys, let's get the important stuff out of the way first. It's going to be a big day at Terravibe Park on June 29, as Lauren Harris, Voivod, Monster Magnet, Wasp and Motley Crue hit town for the Rockwave festival. That's right, Motley Crue for the first time in Athens. Listen guys, this is *ME*talking- don't miss this show. That's an order from the Sonic Boomtown headquarters in Kallithea. More information to come as I get it.

Now for the nitty-gritty about last weekend's shows at Gagarin club on Liossion avenue. It was a real art-attack, two-day blow-out as art-pop songsmiths Oneiropagida played on Friday March 20th, and German prog-rock icons Amon Duul ii took the stage on Saturday the 21st.

Before such Athenian bands as Raining Pleasure, Film and Closer, Oneiropagida was playing FM-friendly Greek-pop that had a great influence on the current generation of local pop artists. Their show on Friday showcased vintage material and new songs from their upcoming CD which will be released in late Spring. Their recorded material reminds one of melodic 70s bands like Firefall, Pablo Cruise and Manfred Mann, but with a more technical, contemporary edge to their sound.

However, live in concert, the band gives excellent turbo-charging to their pieces. On stage they are relaxed and comfortable with their material while still having a booty-shaking time of it with the audience. Set highlights included the pieces, "Thelo na Xero," / "I Want to Know," and "O Megalos Thimos," / "The Big Anger."

Amon Duul ii's show on Saturday night was a completely different ball game from Friday's art-pop presentation. The majority of the group members have been together since the late 1960s and are pretty much universally credited as one of the founding bands of German progressive rock. And, as I have said many times before in this column, when it comes to rock, old guys rule. All the band members, who are currently 60+ years old, play like wild angels. It is a remarkable thing to watch guys who look like older public hospital patients play their instruments with the zeal of inspired kids.

In stark preservational contrast to her band mates, singer Renate Knaup looks vitamin-fortified, protein-enriched and fresh as a flower. She, too, can hardly keep still for a second as the band goes through their remarkably varied repertoire. She rivals such health heroes as Jane Fonda and Cher in her personal appearance and inner glow of wellness.

Their absolutely remarkable set ran the gamut of prog-rock. They opened with a five-minute noise-jam which, over the course of the program, became a showcase for their heavy/funky/art repertoire.

Everything from thudding, Barre-chord dirges to light, skittering theme-pieces were weaved into their presentation. Guitarists Chris Karrer and John Weinzioni at times sounded like something very akin to David Bowie's pantheon guitar-duo of Carlos Alomar and Earl Slick from the mid/late 1970s. Amon Duul ii is testament to the fact that one does not have to slow down, ever, if one is truly inspired by their work. And finally, it appears that the o-so tasty girlgroup Pussycat Dolls (PCD) have been reading this column and actually paid attention to it. Anyone who took a look at my October 31, 2008 column piece, *A Nearly Perfect Girlgroup*, will remember that I told you guys that the best songs on the new PCD album, *Doll Domination*, were "When I Grow Up," and "Bottle Pop." Also, I nearly begged these girls to stop taking

themselves so seriously and to have some fun with their youth and beauty and see what would happen if they did such a thing.

Their new video of "Bottle Pop" is exactly what they needed to really go quantum and reign like titans over the teen-hormone market. It is a seismic concussion of fun, dance, gonzo make-up and visual metaphors that will make you sit up from your chair and say "whoa, baby!" They are finally comfortable with themselves and it comes through the camera lens in spades. They're not trying to be muscular, hard-edged sexpots anymore. They've hit the aesthetic sweetspot between streetwise allure and clever playfulness. They appear to be smart enough, finally, not to over-think a video-shoot and just let the fun and craziness spill-out everywhere. God Himself, would be pleased with the results of their current work. Remember guys, you read the goods here first. Sonic Boomtown gives you the real stuff, everytime. It's the only way to do things. It's the only way that matters.