

# Tool grinds to victory at the Thomas and Mack

By Jeff Hoskin  
Managing Editor

Alternative rockers **Tool** darkened the Thomas and Mack Center on Tuesday, August 18.

More than 6,000 crazed fans packed the stadium's floor and mezzanine to hear the band play in support of its latest and most successful release, *Aenima*. Concert-goers who anticipated a night of dark, heavy music were not disappointed.

Not so, perhaps, those who went expecting to see some kind of sicko show. Considering the band's misanthropic lyrics, downright disturbing videos and persistent rumors of singer Maynard Keenan having breast implants, attendees were wise to be ready for anything.

But although there were a few disturbing moments, the group largely eschewed *Marilyn Manson*-style the-

atrics and *Metallica*-style pyrotechnics and let their music carry the show.

In a press release interview, drummer Danny Carey said, "We're one of the few bands who hasn't had to play any lame fashion games, we've always been able to put art first."

Even the set was low-key - just a video screen, some spooky lighting and a large gong-looking thing. Nothing at all to distract from the music.

Yeah, that music. Classifying Tool's sound has always been difficult. Are they metal?

They seem too cerebral and introspective to fit with *Pantera* or *Testament*. Industrial doesn't work, either: Tool is far too musically, too instrument driven to be classified with digitized acts like *Ministry* or *Skinny Puppy*. Why don't we just say Tool makes perfect music to listen to while plotting revenge, and move on.

Keenan and company were tight, reproducing their studio sound precisely. Songs were immediately recognizable despite the very high volume (this was the loudest concert I've been to in years).

Keenan began the show with a reprise of his Reverend Maynard shtick from "Disgustipated", the "hidden" track on the *Undertow* album.

He came on stage dressed like a Southern evangelical preacher in a white suit and matching pompadour wig, stroking his tie suggestively as the band launched into its latest single, "Eulogy". The Reverend claimed to be a disciple of "Jesus F—— Christ - not Jesus, not Christ; Jesus F—— Christ". He asked the audience if they loved J.F.C.; if so, "Then start f——!"

Keenan dominated nearly the entire show; the other members avoided drawing attention to themselves (bassist Justin Chancellor played much of the show with his back to the audience), while the George Jefferson, often a man being peppered with small arms fire.

After four or five songs, the singer vacated the stage for the

obligatory drum solo. But the band even put their own spin on this hallowed hard-rock concert tradition: Carey was accompanied by Chancellor's growling bass and feedback from Adam Jones' guitar.

Keenan used the respite to visit wardrobe; he reappeared wearing some kind of spandex leierhosen and a lovely purple lace bra. The bra stayed on throughout the remainder of the show, so this writer can neither confirm nor deny any saline-filled rumors.

But the unusual attire didn't affect the audience, which responded with banging heads and pumping arms to "Prison Sex," "Stinkfist" and "Forty-six and Two".

Anthems "Sober" and "Aenima" transformed half the arena floor into a giant and particularly violent mosh pit (at least two people, one of them a Thomas and Mack security guard, were carried out on stretchers).

"Sober" also featured one of the aforementioned strange moments: The video screen, which mostly showed kaleidoscopic abstractions (surprising in light of the band's award-winning videos), here presented what looked like a colon un-

dergoing irrigation.

Perfectly in keeping with their disdain for theatrics, Tool discarded the usual encore formula. After a curt "Good night," the band stood on-stage for a few seconds (rather than leaving as a tease), then said "Okay, we'll do one more," and did the title track from *Opiate*, their first album.

A cartoon of a woman's talking sphincter being serenaded by bespectacled phalluses wrapped up the show.

Other heavy metal bands could learn from this tour. Good hard music can stand on its own. Excessive theatrics can overwhelm even the hardest music. On this night, Tool was in desperate need of all the bells and whistles it could get its hands on.

The **Melvins**, the opening act, also were impressive. The veteran metal band, often called the fathers of grunge, oozed a slow, very heavy musical shroud over the arriving fans.

The Melvins were a fine compliment to the headliner, setting a nice, dark mood. Plenty of moshing went on during their set. And singer/guitarist King Buzzo's Sideshow Bob hair was stranger than anything Tool could (or would) come up with.

## Elvis succeeds in after-death show at Hilton

By Jason Sheehan  
A&E Editor

Audiences spending a night of entertainment at the Las Vegas Hilton the week of Aug. 11-16 involuntarily had their minds suspended in disbelief.

After 837 shows ranging from July 1969 to December 1976 and the subsequent loss of a legend in August 1977, it surely looked like the greatest performer in the history of rock 'n' roll would never again set foot upon his most famous stage.

Well, nay-sayers think again. The King returned to his most famous stage. Cancel the number 837. That number has now been extended to 845.

And this time, Elvis Aaron Presley didn't need Hilton officials to reopen his 5,000-square-foot suite on the 30th floor.

Despite its simplicity, **Elvis-The Concert** is truly one of the greatest illusions and ideas to ever transpire on any global stage. The gang was all there. In fact the only illusion at the Hilton was Elvis, who celebrated the week of his 21st death anniversary prancing across the stage with the help of a big screen located at the center of the stage.

"I think it's great for the fans," lead guitarist James Burton said minutes after performing to a captive audience on opening night. "It's a little different, but it's almost like Elvis being there, and with the live musicians that played with Elvis - the original people - I think that's what makes it really interesting."

Elvis' crew, which included most of the musicians who played with him during his concert era, is the reason this tour has gained the appeal and momentum to make it one for the ages.

Elvis' dynamic force in this reunion was seconded by **The TCB Band**, which still consists of its original members: Burton; Glen D. Hardin, piano; Jerry Scheff, bass guitar; and Ronnie Tutt, drums.

The ageless band was joined by original backup singers, **The Sweet Inspirations** as well as **The Imperials**. The world-class musicians were accompanied by a 16-piece orchestra conducted by Joe Guercio, who returned to Elvis' orchestra after previously working with him from 1970 to 1977.

There really is no easy way to describe this concert. Former band-members surrounded the stage while leaving a spot vacated in the center of the stage for their vacant leader. The band and orchestra were led by footage taken 28 years ago (1970's *Elvis, That's*

*the Way It Is*), 26 years ago (1972's *Elvis on Tour*) and 25 years ago (1973's *Aloha from Hawaii, via Satellite*). This definitely proves that anything can happen in Las Vegas.

In an act of kindness, these great musicians still took a backseat to Elvis. Make no mistake. Elvis is still their leader. Without him, the wide acclaim they have received would likely have amounted to a leaf blowing aimlessly in the wind.

But the fact that Elvis is still the main man on stage - even via footage from the 70s - was the key element that helped turn this concert into an experience.

After the first few songs, the illusion quickly became a reality. Elvis was no longer dead. No, how could he be dead with a voice that was bringing down the house one more time?

The facts: Through technology, The King was reborn and everyone allowed their minds to drift into believing Elvis had returned to reclaim his throne. Fans also were helped into believing this theory due to the fact that half of the concert footage shown was taken from the Hilton (then called the International).

Elvis' lively stature became apparent late in the concert when he sang "Love Me," which also was taken from the Las Vegas showroom. In the footage, he shows love for his fans by leaving the lyrics of the song to kiss his female admirers, some of whom walked the extra mile and launched their tongues deep inside Elvis' mouth. Now that's showmanship at its most intimate moment.

But sadly, no one at the Hilton this year was being smooched by one of the most legendary mouths in the history of rock 'n' roll. That is what made this concert so eerie. In one eye, Elvis was giving his female admirers what they longed for. But in the other eye, the original band members minus one King were all that was left standing on stage once ruled by Elvis.

Yet, Burton could feel his friend's spirit gliding effortlessly across the stage; a grand stage that still belongs to Elvis.

And so could everyone who attended the spectacle known as *Elvis-The Concert*. The man who left bullet holes in the ceiling of his suite and his private elevator may no longer be alive to comment on the problems of today's society, but he still lives to tell of his experiences through his vast collection of music.

Without a shadow of a doubt, this concert proved that The King is alive and well as we head into the 21st century.

Mead

**GUARANTEED Low Prices**

On All Your School Needs At

**Office DEPOT**

Computers To Fit Any Budget

Starting At \$699

COMPAQ

HEWLETT PACKARD Pavilion

TOSHIBA

Incredible Values Every Day At Our Copy & Print Center!

**5 FREE**

**8 1/2 x 11" Color Copies**

with any purchase of \$5.00 or more\*

\*Bring us your receipt on any purchase of \$5.00 or more at Office Depot to receive free offer. Offer good for one sided, unprinted, 8 1/2 x 11" copies. Must present coupon at time of order. Limit one coupon per customer/company. No substitutions. Non-negotiable. Coupons cannot be combined. Photocopies or reproductions not accepted. Offer expires 12/31/98. Offer good at any Office Depot Copy & Print Center. Coupon Code 2599.

Las Vegas

3247 Maryland Pkwy. S.  
(Desert Inn and Maryland Pkwy.)  
(702) 892-9897

MEGA STORE

OPEN DAILY: 7am-9pm SAT.: 9am-9pm SUN.: 10am-6pm  
WE ACCEPT: Discover, Visa, Mastercard, American Express & The Office Depot Credit Card & Technology Card