Jonas Åkerlund, director. *Lords of Chaos*. Gunpowder & Sky, 2019.

Lords of Chaos, directed by three-time Grammy award-winning director, Jonas Åkerlund, is an adaptation of *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground* written by Michael Moynihan and Didrik Søderlind. Both the book and the film are based on real-life events in Norway between the late 1980s and early 1990s. Rory Culkin and Emory Cohen star in this movie as Øystein Aarseth (A.K.A. Euronymous) and Kristian Vikernes (A.K.A. Varg Vikernes), two friends turned enemies in the budding Norwegian black metal scene of the late 1980s. The movie tells the life story of Euronymous and his untimely death amid rising popularity in both the music scene he helped found, and the group of friends he curated over time.

The story begins in 1987 when a young guitarist named Euronymous forms the first black metal band in Oslo, Norway, called "Mayhem." The band takes the aesthetic of death, satanism, and anarchy to new extremes by displaying pig's heads on pikes, spraying pig's blood on the audience, and self-mutilation. "True" Norwegian black metal had only just begun.

The legend of Euronymous, as told by Jonas, is dramatized to captivate the audience. Plenty of details were accurately depicted according to the people and events in the movie. *Lords of Chaos* largely follows Euronymous' character and is narrated by Rory Culkin. The film is seemingly narrated after his death as he is a ghost retelling his story. Through narration, Åkerlund illustrates how these kids make dumb decisions and do not anticipate the consequences of their actions. Rory Culkin's Euronymous has a driven character but still suffers from slight self-consciousness when it involves Varg Vikernes (Emory Cohen) and their game of "one-upmanship" with each other. It was Varg who started the church burnings and convinced Euronymous to participate. It was also Varg who egged on their members of the black circle to commit the burnings and murder which made the news. Åkerlund was capable of portraying both of these men as somewhat unstable but made Vikernes out to be much more of a deranged villain than a pain in Euronymous' side.

The relationship between Varg and Euronymous in reality was friendly up until the end.

Åkerlund also accurately recreates photographs and wardrobes. Although the movie does not showcase the true pictures, many of the images in the movie can be found online with the real persons this movie is based on. The costumes are critical components that their team got right. Their dress is nearly identical to what the real persons wore.

While based on actual real-life events, the movie *Lords of Chaos* is a dramatized version of the story to make a film. The director misses out on the very early days of the band "Mayhem." The band was increasing in popularity from 1984-88, prior to the arrival of the character "Dead." The director also tells the story as if "Mayhem" was a new sound. However, they were formed and influenced by their favorite bands like "Black Sabbath", "Venom", "Motorhead", and "Slayer." Another major criticism of the film is the use of American actors and accents. This storyline is set outside of the U.S., and only the backgrounds and scenery reflect this. The actor's accents are more American than European, making it hard to believe this film takes place in Norway.

Lords of Chaos is a tremendous but gruesome film to watch. It is perfect for those who love historically accurate movies, comedic horrors, movies about music, and those studying both music and popular culture. It is reasonably accurate and tells the story of one of the most influential bands in a genre of music that has transcended beyond Norway into a global phenomenon.

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