

★ CLASSIC ★ ROCK

the **DIRTY**

SSSC: "revolutionary party jams."

"Presidents don't change things. The people who read your magazine do."



★ HIGH HOPES

Street Sweeper Social Club

Tom Morello's new band go on the march with the soundtrack to the revolution.

HIS FIRST BAND threatened us with a bullet to the head. His new one deals in even heavier artillery. "A street sweeper is an illegal machine-gun that shoots shotgun shells," explains Tom Morello. "And it's actually the only weapon that the National Rifle Association is in favour of banning. It's a weapon that is not made for any purpose other than mowing down a lot of people at once. Which we hope our music will do."

Given Morello's track record, it seems a safe bet that it will. With Rage Against The Machine on ice once again ("but we're all open to more shows in the future") and no suggestion that Audioslave will return from 2007's parting, the guitarist's musical output is split between acoustic protest songs as The Nightwatchman and the "revolutionary party jams" of this latest venture (the Axis Of Justice organisation scratches his political itch, meanwhile), Street Sweeper Social Club. SSSC has just two members, with The Coup's Boots Riley rapping white-hot dissent over Morello's riffs and bass lines, and muso friends helping out at live shows and on their eponymous debut.

"Boots and I have been friends a long time," says Morello, "and when Audioslave disbanded I knew I wanted to make a record with him. We had dinner together and I made him an offer he

couldn't refuse. I handed him a cassette of about 20 songs and he picked the ones he liked best. The idea was that it was gonna be incendiary; songs that while banging your head, you could also shake your ass to – on your way to smashing the state."

Certainly song titles like *Fight! Smash! Win!* should mobilise the children of the revolution, as should the right-on polemic of Riley's lyrics (*May the caviar patois you were eating block your airway*), he seethes on the bourgeois-baiting lead-off single, *100 Little Curses*). But it would all be so much empty rhetoric without Morello's strutting, seismic guitar blitzkrieg. "This is some of the heaviest music that I've put on a record in a very, very long time," he agrees. "It's an unapologetic rock record. And there are no ballads."

So we have the soundtrack. All we need now is the revolution. After being involved in political rock for 17 years, does Morello seriously believe he's making a difference?

"If I'm to believe the people that come up to me in street every day," he fires back. "I know that political bands like The Clash and Public Enemy changed my life and helped to propel me down a path to looking at the world a different way and acting in a different way. That's how change happens; it's not prime ministers and presidents and supreme courts. It's the people who read your magazine." **HY**

Street Sweeper Social Club is out now on SSSC.

FOR FANS OF...
Black Sabbath
Vol 4

"It depends if you asked me or you asked Boots. If you asked me I'd say Black Sabbath's Vol 4. If you asked Boots he'd probably say Stevie Wonder. I just like the unapologetic riff-rockingness of Vol 4. On our record, I thought, let's see how many awesome riffs we can pack into 11 songs. It's a relentless guitar assault."