

DVD REVIEWS



Iggy Pop: *Lust for Life*: DVD

Lust for Life (1986) is a forty-one-minute Iggy Pop/Stooges documentary, originally created for West German Television. The film was put into production to maximize the commercial success of Pop's *Blah Blah Blah* record. *Lust for Life* haphazardly recounts Iggy's life—from his Ann Arbor beginnings to his mid-'80s solo career. What's interesting about *Lust for Life* is the film's composition and the way it inadvertently captures the zeitgeist of the mid-'80s.

In terms of composition, it's clear that the director of *Lust for Life* had a greater interest in the Stooges than Iggy's solo career (approximately half of the DVD's screen time is devoted to interviews with Iggy Pop and Ron Asheton discussing their old band). *Blah Blah Blah* simply serves as the pretext this German crew needed to document the Stooges and Pop's teenage years. And that's understandable: Iggy's early-to-mid-'80s output was generally lackluster. Nevertheless, Iggy's first two albums—(ironically) *Lust for Life* and *The Idiot*—are glossed over, which is a shame, as they rank right up there with the Stooges' self-titled debut and *Fun House*.

Lust for Life does an excellent job in capturing the puritanical ethos and socioeconomics of the 1980s. Iggy comes off as incredibly business-minded—almost completely divorced from his iconoclastic Stooges persona. (Pop claims he now has two personalities—the “kid” Iggy and the “serious”

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Iggy.) Pop is incredibly fit; he's off of drugs and totally uninterested in anyone but himself—breaking mid-sentence in the film to ask an underling for a cup of coffee. Iggy is Ronald Reagan's rugged individual in punk form. Like globalization (which spread precipitously in the 1980s), Pop is everywhere in this documentary; he has no home. Compare this to Ron Asheton, who is interviewed in his mother's basement in Ann Arbor, recounting the Stooges' early days in the very room the band used to rehearse in. Ron states that he hasn't seen Iggy in years because Iggy has no reason to visit Ann

U.P.S.: *UPS Box*: DVD/CD

By the time I got to Tucson in 1988, UPS stickers were all over town. Close to the shipping company's logo, it had something off, something viral about it that told you it had to be a band. Some people talked about big shows they had in the glory days. Usual talk. That's one of the great things about punk rock, in the do-it-yourself realm—every town can have their own golden era. With pissed-off youth in every neighborhood, your town probably had rad bands in the '80s screaming about what we all felt pent up about. UPS

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Arbor anymore. Like blue-collar labor, Ron is archaic; incompatible with deindustrialization (Iggy Pop), Asheton's left on the sidelines, overweight and doing fuck knows what near the epicenter of America's dying auto industry. Iggy Pop drinks Perrier in this film; Asheton downs American ale.

Lust for Life is valuable in that it does an excellent job of capturing where Iggy Pop and Ron Asheton were in the mid-'80s. In terms of an informative documentary, it completely fails. No mention is made of Scott Asheton or the late Dave Alexander (the unsung hero of the Stooges). With the exception of the documentary's title, Iggy's seminal late-'70s work is never referenced. For all intents and purposes, *Lust for Life* is a glorified promo package for Iggy Pop, who comes off as something of a douchebag. If you're looking for a hero in this documentary, it's Ron Asheton—who seems to represent more of the imagined ideals of the Stooges. Asheton actually seems interested in answering the interviewer's questions, while Iggy just goes on narcissistic autopilot.

For Iggy Pop and Stooges fans, *Lust for Life* is worth about ten bucks. For casual fans, this documentary isn't worth the price of admission. For the second group, I recommend checking out a biography on Iggy from your local library or trading in your *Best of Iggy Pop* CD for *Fun House* on vinyl. —Ryan Leach (ABC Entertainment)

was Tucson's at that time. This 25th anniversary DVD documents a couple of great shows. Their sound was solid '80s fast punk, making a living under thirty seconds, growing from Tesco Vee-ish snotty punk to more harsh speedy hardcore, always extremely catchy. Half the band looked like they belonged in GBH (mohawks and studded leather), the other half straight outta D.I. skate rock, and a metalhead guitarist (long hair, no shirt), summed it up—misfits coming together. Awesome. One show is in the University of Arizona's “Cellar” in the student union, a basic stage and room that was more for stand-up comedy troupes with its brick wall. The next day the school newspaper cried riot with furniture being pushed outta the way for mosh pits (a better term then). The footage looks like VHS, making it even more lurid fun to watch. The other show on the DVD is of a downtown, outside freaks show, with the public pretending it was Halloween, basically. The footage is in better shape and from a public access crew. The package includes some booklets and a great CD with eighty-five songs! Music from five CDs, some unreleased. Punk's not dead. —Speedway Randy (Disillusion Music, www.uselesspiecesofshit.com)

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