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TV PARTY - N



NEW YORK DOLLS - All Dolled Up *{MVD}* This lasts for about 4 hours and during that time there is very little filler. For those who don't know the legacy of the fantastic NY DOLLS, here's a brief history lesson. The band released two albums in the early 70s that provided a catalyst for many of the first wave of Punk bands on both sides of the Atlantic. The band featured JOHNNY THUNDERS, but it was far from a one-man show. The band dressed outrageously using make-up, women's clothes and anything else at hand and, simply, it rocked like very few had done before.

The core 95-minute movie here was filmed by photographer, Bob Gruen, using the then-new technology of a portable video recorder. Gruen amassed over 40 hours of DOLLS footage from which this is taken. It kicks off with the Lipstick Killers promo before heading to NYC with performances at Kenny's Castaways and the legendary

shows at Max's Kansas City before following the band to the West Coast for shows at LA's Whisky A Go Go, some awesome sounding shows at The Matrix in San Francisco and then back again. In between there is candid footage of the band backstage complete with pre-show grooming and post-show groupies, in interview and just kicking back.

It's frequently funny also. You see guitarist Sylvain trimming his armpit hair before a TV show, vocalist David Johansen proudly stating that if anyone fucks with the DOLLS, he'll personally mail a package of dogshit to that critic and a whole heap more rock 'n' roll shennanigans. One of the funniest moments is at the airport as the band depart for LA. Sylvain in particular looked outrageous with knee-high, high-heeled boots and the shortest, tightest shorts imaginable. The stares the band received from various people at the airport are hilarious.

The interview footage, filmed mainly on a grassy verge in LA, is interesting and frequently revealing. Thunders seemed so full of life and energy - obviously this was filmed before the Heroin got a hold. He also states throughout the film that Johansen is the rudest guy he has ever known; while sunning his skinny torso, Johansen has a pop at Thunders also.

Of the extras, there is a veritable plethora. You get full performances of about a dozen songs from the DVD (including a ferocious take on 'Who Are The Mystery Girls?' filmed at the SF show). Then you get about an hour's worth of stills from Bob Gruen's photo gallery of the DOLLS coupled with his narration which is a joy to see and hear. Then there's an interview conducted by THE DICTATORS' Handsome Dick Manitoba with Bob Gruen and finally versions of the film itself with commentary by Johansen, Sylvain and Gruen. On top of that, there's a 16-page booklet fleshing out the whole package.

It's really hard to find fault with this. The only negative - and it's one that can't be helped - is the fact it's all in Black and White. The technology just wasn't available for colour filming in this way and in many ways the lack of colour is not even apparent until you see some of Gruen's colour photos. Man, the DOLLS looked like an explosion of colour in the black and white footage, but some of the photos are simply sensational.

The strength of the live footage and the behind-the-scenes character assessments of the DOLLS makes this stuff priceless. A great package that should appease any DOLLS fan - casual or obsessive.

| Rules = No Rules |