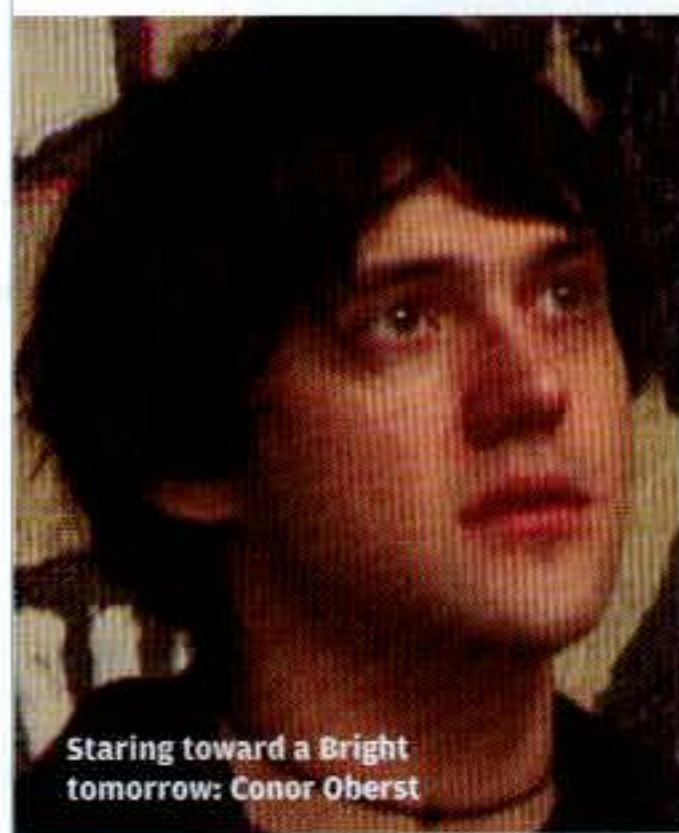




New York Dolls: Can you spot the future Mormon?

Azure Ray and Lullaby for the Working Class, among others) its due. But since the film was made by label co-head Jason Kulbel and Rob Walter, the "scene" element and the incestuous way the 11 bands share members, the film can feel cliquish and self-congratulatory. Its saving grace is the compelling Saddle Creek story (one tape by a punk kid leads to an internationally renowned record label with likewise notable bands 10 years later). By remaining factual, telling their own story without resorting to trite something-in-the-water hype, Saddle Creek and its principal play-



Staring toward a Bright tomorrow: Conor Oberst

ers (most of the bands are represented in interviews and performance footage) mitigate the grate. Perhaps that's why the label, after a decade, remains vital—even when they're climbing up their own butts, they don't see anything special. They leave that to us.

Notable special features: Dark, shaky footage of Conor Oberst's band Commander Venus live in 1995, deleted scenes.

New York Dolls All Dolled Up: A New York Dolls Story

(MUSIC VIDEO DISTRIBUTORS, +/- 4 HOURS)
Dolls, definitely



Renowned rock photographer Bob Gruen (the Clash, John Lennon) and wife Nadya began filming the New York Dolls in the early 1970s and, over three years, compiled 40 hours of black-and-white performance and interview footage of the notorious glam-rock band. Of course, the band is shown in its prime, balls-out (or tucked in...?) and rocking at the usual NYC clubs, but also somewhat out of context on the West Coast, doing TV appearances and chatting on a hillside. Additionally, Gruen captured the band in the twilight of their youth, before David Johansen turned into walking ash, Johnny Thunders crashed and burned, Arthur "Killer" Kane disappeared into Mormonism (and passed away) and the band lost its spark. They still look like children, and you can see a spark in their eyes that today has faded in the surviving members (even the more perky Sylvain Sylvain). That's the main appeal of the film: its perspective. The Gruens give us a priceless peek at the New York Dolls during their peak.

Notable special features: Gruen, Johansen and Sylvain look back at their crazy days in a feature-length commentary track. Other features: full performances of 12 songs, narrated photo gallery, photo booklet, interview with Gruen by Handsome Dick Manitoba and outtakes.

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