



New York Dolls

All Dolled Up (DVD)

Music Video Distributors

Review by Bucky for Rock N Roll Universe

'All Dolled Up,' and the title of their last official studio album 'Too Much Too Soon' sums it up best for the rise and fall of one of New York City's most promising and influential bands ever, "The New York Dolls". The Dolls' music and style is the result of placing The Rolling Stones, Alice Cooper, MC5 and the Velvet Underground in a blender. The Dolls were always accused of wearing women's clothing onstage, but as filmmaker and rock photographer Bob Gruen puts it "What women do you know would wear what they wear?" If you are a NY Dolls fan that has everything that was ever released and just can't get enough, buy this DVD. If you never heard the NY Dolls but are curious I would recommend buying their 2 official studio albums 'New York Dolls,' 'Too Much Too Soon' and give them a listen before you think about buying this DVD.

Rock photographer Bob Gruen and his wife purchased a portable video recorder in 1972. Within 3 years they shot over 40 hours of footage of the New York Dolls. This DVD is a compilation of the footage complete with backstage banter, interview clips, and the onstage Raunch & Roll that the Dolls were known for. All the footage is shot in black & white (which really takes away from the bands colorful appearances onstage) and the concert footage is shot from 1 camera angle. The sound is a bit rough and not polished but that was the Dolls. I recommend the first thing to do with this DVD is go straight to the Bonus features and either start with the interview with Bob Gruen (who is being interviewed by former Dictators lead singer "Handsome" Dick Manitoba) or the photo gallery which is narrated by Gruen. Gruen does a great job telling stories about each photo. He definitely keeps your interest, and some of the photos are in color so you get to see how important color was to the Dolls. The full performances of 12 songs are also on the bonus features. Throughout the tracks Johnny Thunders really stands out, especially on "Mystery Girls," "Chatterbox" and "Pills". "Pills" (originally by Bo Diddley) is pretty wild as it features Johansen singing with his low gravelly voice, blowing his harp while wearing a dress and high heels. Bass player Arthur Kane is not playing on some of the performances as a result of his girlfriend trying to cut off his thumb to keep him from touring the West Coast. He is visible standing by the amps with his arm in a cast on a few of the tracks. The main 95 minute piece tends to be a bit boring at times. There is a great clip of the Dolls performing "Personality Crisis" on the Don Steele Show, and the footage of their last show from the Little Hippodrome Club is awesome. I found it more entertaining to select the Sylvain Sylvain and Bob Gruen commentary option while watching it. The concert footage is intertwined with the backstage banter and interview clips throughout the DVD. It's great to watch how Johansen developed his stage persona from the beginning to the end of the Dolls. Throughout the DVD Johansen is constantly playing with his hair, pouting and posing in front of mirrors trying to get that ultimate rock & roll look and style that he would achieve later down the road. Meanwhile, Johnny Thunders didn't have to try, he already was rock & roll. One look at Thunders and you can see where the whole 80's hairband phenomenon got started. I did enjoy the DVD (although I didn't need to see Sylvain Sylvain get his underarm hair trimmed) especially the bonus features which once again, I highly recommend watching first.

http://www.rocknrolluniverse.com/rocknrolluniverse_151.htm

