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loudQUIETloud DVD

Pixies

Music Video Distributors



(out of 5)



"I've never seen four people not be able to talk to each other," Kelley Deal says to twin sister and Pixies bassist, Kim, half-jokingly. "You guys are the worst four communicators ever." Once you get around the siblings' downright bizarre relationship (not to mention the sneaking suspicion that our seeing them in the same room together is really just the result of some Patty Duke-era camera trickery), it's clear that Kelley -- the elder of the two, by a full 11 minutes -- is hardly joking at all, and the answers to those years of ambiguously talked-around questions as to the demise of her sister's first band are

painfully clear: The Pixies didn't really like each other all that much.

loudQuietloud isn't the story of the Pixies in any kind of traditional rockumentary sense. We get faint whiffs of their humble beginnings, and the break-up stories that we generally pay the price of admission to watch unfold, but the members merely hint at both over the course of the film, save for one or two overly sentimental forays into the former. The film opens with the band rehearsing, for the first time in 11 years -- since their breakup. Kim can't remember the exact number of times she sings "change" in "Hey." It's a rocky start, to be sure, but by the time it gives way to the story's rocky middle and ending, it appears to have been downright smooth sailing.



Everyone's a little bit larger and balder (some a lot more so than others) now. The younger Deal is struggling with sobriety, demanding the band have a dry backstage, as she sucks down cases on non-alcoholic Molson Exels, and Starbucks iced mochas by the truckload. Singer/guitarist Frank Black has since immersed himself in self-help cassettes and his solo career he seems as eager to leap back into as he did during the waning days of The Pixies' first stand. Communicating with his wife and young children and producing a film on his Powerbook occupies guitarist Joey Santiago for the bulk of the trip (though, to his credit, the moments he has each member contribute an instrument to his soundtrack are a big chunk of the few truly collaborative moments between members over the course of the film). Drummer David Lovering, who, during The Pixies' decade-plus absence has divided his time between perfecting his magician act and metal-detecting on Los Angeles beaches, watches his father succumb to cancer, and battles what may or may not be a valium addiction.

It's a recipe for tension, confrontations and meltdowns. Fortunately, the band members had the foresight to rent separate buses.

The beauty of *loudQUIETloud* is that the filmmakers don't see the necessity in rooting around for such inner-band turmoil. They simply let video roll, and a scoop up a few choices pieces amongst the deluge of neurosis. It's a satisfying feeling after having spent years being spoon-fed drama from hundreds of hours of *Behind the Music* marathons. No one ODs or loses an arm in a fiery car wreck; it's just the story of four people bound together who share little in common beyond the hour and a half a night they spend together, creating magic. Those moments, quite possible the only ones during the film in which the audience doesn't feel a desire to strangle at least one of the members, are stern reminder of what this was all about in the first place.

- *Brian Heater*

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