

# 2006 Music Doc Roundup (cont.)



### The Fearless Freaks

Another name for this doc about The Flaming Lips made and narrated by their pal, filmmaker Bradley Beesley, could be *Four Midwestern Weirdos Make Good*. This is *Behind the Music* with heart, delving into the family and personal lives of the band members and celebrating their many artistic innovations.

**BEST PART:** Witnessing the band's willingness to try new things, despite mainstream pressure to do otherwise, like with their "Boom Box Experiment," a concert where audience members participated through tape deck manipulation. As someone says in the movie, "They were too weird even for the punk rockers."

**I COULD LIVE WITHOUT:** It was a little hard to keep track of band member changes and front man Wayne Coyne's many brothers. Also, the movie loses a little steam when it goes behind-the-scenes on Coyne's homegrown sci-fi flick.

**CELEB SIGHTINGS:** Flaming Lips fans Liz Phair and Juliette Lewis each make appearances.

**WORD UP:** "Wayne went to Hollywood and did concerts. I went to jail. We went our separate ways."  
- Wayne Coyne's oldest brother

### Jericho's Echo: Punk Rock in the Holy Land

(Review by Michael Read)  
If punk rock strikes a distorted chord in you, this low-budget doc shot in Israel will give you plenty of reasons to mosh. The film follows several charismatic young bands from Tel Aviv's small and passionate punk community, giving them ample opportunity to articulate their worldview. This is not your grandpa's punk rock, when dumb-witted nihilism ruled the stage. Whip-smart and world-weary, the mohawked malcontents of Jericho's Echo find fleeting reprieve from

the Intifada through thrash-happy stomping.  
**BEST PART:** Getting a privileged, in-crowd peek at Israel's youth culture and hearing hardcore in Hebrew.

**I COULD LIVE WITHOUT:** Too much screen time for a band that sounds suspiciously like Blink 182.

**WORD UP:** "We try to be joyful, like there's no evil in this world. Plus, we like ska."  
-Dennis from Smash4\$, Israeli ska punk band

"Maybe we like Israel because it's difficult to be a punk here. It's difficult for people to hear what you say, because they are far away in their thoughts. So if a little boy becomes a punk, it's f\*cking cool for us."  
-Asi from Chaos Rabak, Israeli street punk band

### loud QUIET loud: A Film About The Pixies

I first fell in love with the Pixies on a mixtape from a high school boyfriend and was devastated to learn that they had already broken up. This film follows their reunion tour over 10 years later, and it is a good reminder of why I didn't go to any of the shows. Just because a band makes interesting music does not necessarily mean that they are interesting people, and in this case the members are burnt out, strung out, or just plain sad. My advice is to skip the film and go buy the records.

**BEST PART:** The sweeter side of the band members that showed during family moments, like Joey's webcam conversations from the road with his wife and babies, and Frank Black's trip to the aquarium with his girlfriend's adorable little son.

**I COULD LIVE WITHOUT:** The unflattering closeups of Frank Black's double chin during live performances.

**WORD UP:** "After the Pixies broke up, David gave up

drums to pursue hobbies such as magic and metal detecting."

"When the tickets first went on sale and they starting selling out in five minutes, I thought, 'Well this is going to go OK.'"

-Pixies front man Charles Thompson, a.k.a. Frank Black

### The Refugee Allstars

The Refugee Allstars Band formed in a refugee camp in Guinea, after fleeing there with thousands of others during the brutal civil war in the '90's in their small West African country of Sierra Leone. The charismatic and talented group decided that their fellow refugees needed to be entertained to distract them from the overwhelming worries and sorrows that they faced. This movie tells the story of the band, their UNHCR-sponsored refugee camp tour, and the difficult decision about whether or not to return to their ravaged homeland for good after the war was declared over.

**BEST PART:** The band performs despite the devastation they have faced, including the murder of family members and even some forced amputation of their own limbs. The fact that people would even try to make music in such a circumstance is inspiring.

**I COULD LIVE WITHOUT:** Civil War! It's beyond horrible. Why do we do this to each other? (Be warned: there are some graphic depictions of human suffering here.)

**WORD UP:** "As a musician, the wind is always carrying us. When the happy wind comes across you can go with that breeze and see how the life is going on."  
-Refugee Allstars band member

"I will never forget my pen, [pointing to drumsticks]. These are my pen, the key to heaven. You cannot compare this to a gun. This cannot kill. It can make you happy."  
-Refugee Allstars drummer