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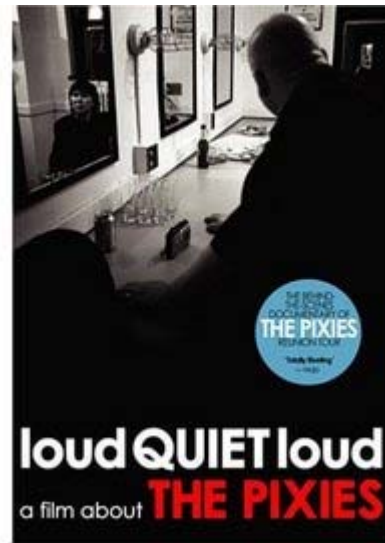
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loud Quiet loud: A Film About The Pixies (Music Documentary) + Pixies – Club Date: - Live At The Paradise In Boston (Music)

Picture: C/C+ Sound: C+/B- Extras: B Film: A/B



The first time I saw the Pixies was in 1989. I had only heard Doolittle once, and while I liked it I hadn't really listened to it as fully as I could have. I looked forward to seeing them, but they were opening for Love and Rockets and were, quite honestly, a secondary reason for me to go.

The second song on their setlist was Tame (at least that's how I remember it). It started out slow and mellow, then without warning Black Francis screamed loud enough to blow the roof off the venue and to ensure that I was a lifelong fan. There was a power emanating from the stage, made all the more so by how it contrasted with the calm moments.

Loud, quiet, loud. This is as good a way to define the Pixies sound as any as issued by Music Video Distributors. When they were first writing and performing their now classic songs in the Boston club scene in the mid 80's no one knew just how influential they were to become. The documentary begins with a quote by Kurt Cobain of Nirvana from a Rolling Stone interview in 1994.

"I was basically trying to rip off the Pixies," he says.

With that in mind it's easy to hear the influence, not only on Nirvana, but on the whole grunge movement and the explosion of Alternative music in the mainstream. Unfortunately, by the time the masses had been told that Doolittle was a classic album and that a million bands referenced them as a major influence, the Pixies were no more.

Frank Black is the only member to maintain a consistent career as a

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performer in the music industry. Joey Santiago has played on some albums and worked writing film scores. David Lovering became a stage magician and essentially lived off the continuing residuals from the sale of Pixies material. Kim Deal enjoyed a brief moment of nationwide success with the Breeders in the early 90's but fought substance abuse for years, eventually coming back to Ohio to live with her mom and retire from public life.

loud Quiet loud is a film about their 2004 reunion tour. It is an incredibly well made documentary. They play sold out shows around the world for audiences far larger than any they had previously played for. There is a level of expectation that seems at times overwhelming to all of them. They were always an unlikely bunch of rock stars; they were all average kids who managed to create something that went beyond them. The success of the film lies in showing the contrast between the quiet personal lives of the individual band members and the loud public persona they collectively share.

Nowhere is this discrepancy more obvious than with Kim. Throughout the film we see her struggle with her recovery (she allows no alcohol backstage). She and her twin sister Kelly, who accompanies her on the tour for emotional support, both appear fragile and overwhelmed by the experience. Yet Kim is confronted time and time again by young women who idolize her, who tell her she has changed their lives, that she is their god. The incongruity between the goddess of her public persona and the frumpy, middle-aged, recovering addict we see offstage is stunning.

We see it with the others as well. David's father dies of cancer while they are on tour. We see his grief and his ensuing descent into substance abuse. We see Joey trying desperately to keep in touch with his wife and children while on tour. We see Frank as he discovers his girlfriend is pregnant, as well as charming scenes of his interaction with her children.

And we see the conflict that still exists among them. No one except the Pixies know exactly what happened among them when they broke up. Ego conflicts, too much time together and too much pressure, simply growing apart, all played their parts. Black describes them as a dysfunctional family. In a phone interview we see him visibly frustrated as he is asked for the millionth time why they broke up and how they are currently getting along. Eventually he puts the interviewer off by saying that they really don't talk that much because that's just the kind of people they are. This is followed by a scene of them backstage waiting to go on, and no one is talking. But it's not all tension. We see them laughing and joking with each other, sharing good news and personal concern. Whatever differences they may have, they are family.

It is this humanity that sets them apart, that makes their fans believe anyone can accomplish great and lasting things.

As a fan it would be nice to see more archival footage of the Pixies past, though it is a safe bet that there really isn't much from their early days. Who knew in 1986 what they would become? The focus of this DVD is the story of their reunion and the behind the scenes nature of it. Luckily there are several other discs out there that chronicle their live performances (you can read reviews of a couple of them at links provided below). It's easy to see examples of the reunion tour.



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One Pixies show is much like another; they're not a jam band playing radically different versions of their songs at every show. What sets **Pixies – Club Date: Live at the Paradise in Boston** apart from the others (aside from it taking place in Boston, where the Pixies first began) is the archival footage included with the extra features. Filmed on a handheld video camera on Halloween, 1996, the footage is jumpy and poorly lit. The sound is bad. There are bad cuts between songs, some of them cutting out early, others starting late. It doesn't matter. This is the freaking Pixies in 1986! What is most striking is how complete and powerful the songs are, even at this early stage. What was performed for a small handful of people in a local bar became a couple of classic albums and continues to inspire wannabe rock stars the world over.

The anamorphically enhanced 1.78 X 1 image on **loud Quiet loud** is surprisingly rough, looking no better and sometimes worse than the older Boston concert with the same specks. The Dolby Digital 5.1 sound mix on **loud** stretches out the sound a bit more than it should. Eagle has Dolby 5.1 and DTS, with the DTS being the best of both DVDs, though showing its age in fidelity limits. Extras on **loud** include an audio commentary, 16-page booklet about the band and film inside the DVD case and bonus scenes, while **Boston** has a set of bonus tracks.

Links to other Pixies reviews include:

Pixies Sell Out: 2004 Reunion Tour

<http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/2990/The+Pixies+Sell+Out:+2004+Reunion+Tour>

Pixies Acoustic: Live In Newport 2005

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- Wayne Wise

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Wayne Wise has now written more articles about the Pixies and/or Frank Black than any other artist.