

DVD: loudQUIETloud a fim about the Pixies (2006)

Review Rating: Excellent

Label/Studio: MVD Visual

Catalog #: DR-4529

Region: 1 (NTSC)

Released: November 7, 2006

Genre: Documentary

Synopsis: Intimate glimpse of Pixies band members during their 2004 reunion tour.

Directed by: Steven Canton, Matthew Galkin

Screenplay by: (none credited)

Daniel Lanois

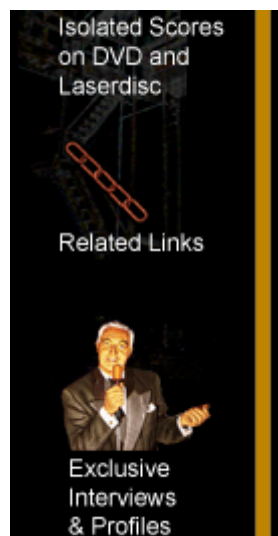


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**Music by:****Produced by:** Steven Cantor, Daniel Laikin**Cast:**

Charles Thompson, Kim Deal, Dave Lovering, and Joey Santiago.

Film Length: 85 mins**Process/Ratio:** 1.78:1**Colour****Anamorphic DVD:** Yes**Languages:** English Dolby 5.1, English Dolby 2.0 Stereo**Subtitles:****Special Features :**

Audio Commentary by co-directors Steven Canton, Matthew Galkin and editor Trevor Ristow / 7 Deleted Scenes (28:00) / Featurette: The Scoring of a Film with Daniel Lanois (5:16)

Comments :

Most concert documentaries tend to offer a narrative balance containing live & rehearsed music sets, bits of conflict, the bonding that occurs on stage, audience adulation, and a postscript that places the band - reunited, or still together after decades as an ongoing entity - in a shiny happy place; it's something **loudQUIETloud** does achieve on a modest level, but it's the greater social aspects that make the film such a remarkable document of what happens to modern rock stars after they call it quits.

QUIET begins after the Pixies have announced their intention to reassemble for a reunion tour in 2004, and follows their ten-month journey as they reacquaint themselves with old lyrics, chords, & memorable guitar riffs, and experience genuine surprise when they realize, from the first live venue, that masses of people - contemporaries and younger fans - actually give a damn about their music. Playing to packed houses and sold out concerts across the planet, the older, heavier, and sober musicians are shown with a nakedness that's humane, and never exploitive.

From the recent spate of rock documentaries in recent years, like MVD's **Not a Photograph: the Mission of Burma Story**, there's proof that not all musicians become drug addicts, die in a filthy hotel, or destroy themselves in a blaze of self-masochism after a band's breakup. You could argue that it happens over a much slower time-span, but the age-old cliché of combustible brilliance isn't the new reality.

After the dissolution of the Pixies, members were able to live off royalties for a while, but as with any career change - like a former retail manager, computer programmer, teacher, whatever - a person has to figure out what to do next with their life, now that the glory years of a musical career has, to some degree, folded: guitarist/singer Charles Thompson knew that his solo efforts would always have to live under the shadow of the Pixies; bassist Kim Deal was more successful with her own band, **the Breeders**, which included twin sister Kelley; drummer Dave Lovering had his own non-Pixies interests, like a passion for magic; and guitarist Joey Santiago had a family to look after, but was enjoying the beginnings of a film scoring career in spite of dwindling royalty payments (partially attributed to illegal MP3 downloading).

The reunion tour became a kind of blessing, as each member was experiencing his/her own kind of stress and career struggles, and while one could lump the reunion concept as an easy cash-in and panacea for lean times, it has to be more

than just money than convinces former bandmates to willingly spend almost a year on the road again, often in close quarters, knowing they'll start to get twitchy and toasty fairly early into the tour.

There's plenty of material showing the band on the road, but there's also something unique about this specific generation of rockers: Deal's parents show up to attend a concert, with her sister videotaping the whole endeavor for posterity; internet and modern toys enable Santiago to see and speak to his kids he's barely seen in person while on tour; and various other family members pop in during the tour - an aspect that contradicts the image of rockers being rebels who live, drink, and play hard, and piss-off the closest and most important people in their lives with deliberate malevolence. Maybe it's the age factor or the need to keep the band clean and functional to honor the bookings, but there's something to be celebrated when aging icons have maintained ties with the most important people in their lives, and not become pitiful clichés.

The family members are also frank in their on-camera assessments of the band's oddball makeup; as Kelley Deal observes, it's extraordinary how little communication goes on between four people who spent many intense years together, although guitarist/singer Thompson attributes their need for distance and silence as a coping mechanism from living together in a closet for so long, and their personality quirks.

QUIET is not a document of any one concert; the music and performances are the textural events that lead into intimate exchanges of joy, sadness, and frustration, but there's a good sampling of material to pique interest among newcomers to the Pixies' music. Directors Steven Cantor and Matthew Galkin have also structured the film with some nice poetic touches through editing, and subtle ploys, like beginning and ending the film with respective rehearsed and refined versions of the same song.

It's also nice to see each musician struggle with an identity: juggling second careers, including guitarist/singer Thompson deliberating on the chances that his country-styled album might be a stillborn concept to the major labels; and guitarist Santiago trying to complete a score for a documentary while on the road. ([Santiago](#) has already scored several high-profile productions, including the cable TV series **Weeds**, and **Undeclared**.)

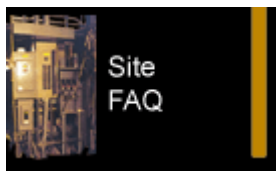
MVD's disc also includes about 28 mins. of deleted scenes, all seven of which were wisely shorn from the film because they slowed down the pacing, and didn't advance the narrative; they're interesting outtakes, but don't add anything new to the already tight running time. Some of the deleted material is referenced in the DVD's excellent commentary track, and the co-directors and their editor discuss their first (and much longer) attempt to chronicle the band's tour, plus scenes that were reshaped as the film was fine cut.

It's interesting how the film began as a means for the filmmakers to see the band - much better than buying tickets - but their observations on the musicians, who gradually withdrew from each other, becomes quite poignant. The trio also explains their efforts to stay true to the band's own loud-quiet-loud style of writing and performing, and how they structured the film to reflect that characteristic. Just as unique was their scouring of fan sites, and picking up what facets of each member's live performance fans wanted to see in detail, as with the great angles on guitarist Santiago.

MVD's transfer is first-rate, with a rich colour design that preserves the energy of the live performances. Just as notable is the dynamic sound design, and the superb camerawork which follows the group through cramped quarters, yet never draws attention to the cinematographer.

A sixteen-page booklet with liner notes by New York Times writer [Ben Sisario](#), author of the Pixies profile, **Doolittle**, adds additional info on the tour. A short featurette with the doc's composer, iconic composer/producer [Daniel Lanois](#), was filmed during the two-day recording phase of the score, as he and three musicians performed mostly acoustic instruments to create an intimate score that augment the film's more pensive sections without being too glaringly upbeat. Lanois mentions his other rare outing as a film composer - **Slingshot** - which he similarly found to be a rewarding experience.

QUIET might play like a rock documentary, but it's the unpretentious human aspects that make the film such a worthwhile experience.



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