

Wave Of Adoration

Just over a decade after splitting, indie-rock icons get filmed during 2004 reunion tour *By Matt Fink*

THE PIXIES ★★★½

loudQUIETloud [STICK]

Though *loudQUIETloud* does little to explain exactly why the Pixies disbanded in 1993 at the moment when they appeared poised for a commercial breakthrough (or why they reunited just as abruptly in 2004), this behind-the-scenes document is nonetheless revelatory as it follows the group's first awkward steps toward enjoying its legacy. Opening with its fumbling first rehearsals—as the band tries to relearn songs it hasn't played together for over a decade—and stretching through its U.S. and European tours, the fly-on-the-wall storytelling suggests there are few, if any, lingering tensions between vocalist/songwriter Charles Thompson (a.k.a. Black Francis) and bassist Kim Deal. Following the band through various backstages, tour buses and hotel rooms, the multi-camera footage is intimate and unsparing, presenting a band whose members need the tour even more than fans want it. Unexpectedly, the massively successful tour becomes only a subtext for exploring how much the members have changed since their first go-round.

Thompson is cast as the unflappable soon-to-be father, working on his second marriage while cranking out solo albums. Outwardly unfazed by the rapturous response at every stop, he is given the film's most sustained focus, making time for interviews and playing with his step-kids while seemingly unable to tell his bandmates that he'd like to make another Pixies album. Sober for the first time in her adult life, Deal is disarmingly giddy that so many people still care about the Pixies, but she's so nervous to go on the road that she enlists sister (and Breeders bandmate) Kelley to accompany her. Lead guitarist Joey Santiago is a quiet family man who now scores soundtracks, missing the birth of his second child to do a tour he admits he needs to keep the family afloat. Having traded his drumsticks for a magician's wand, David Lovering is the film's tragic

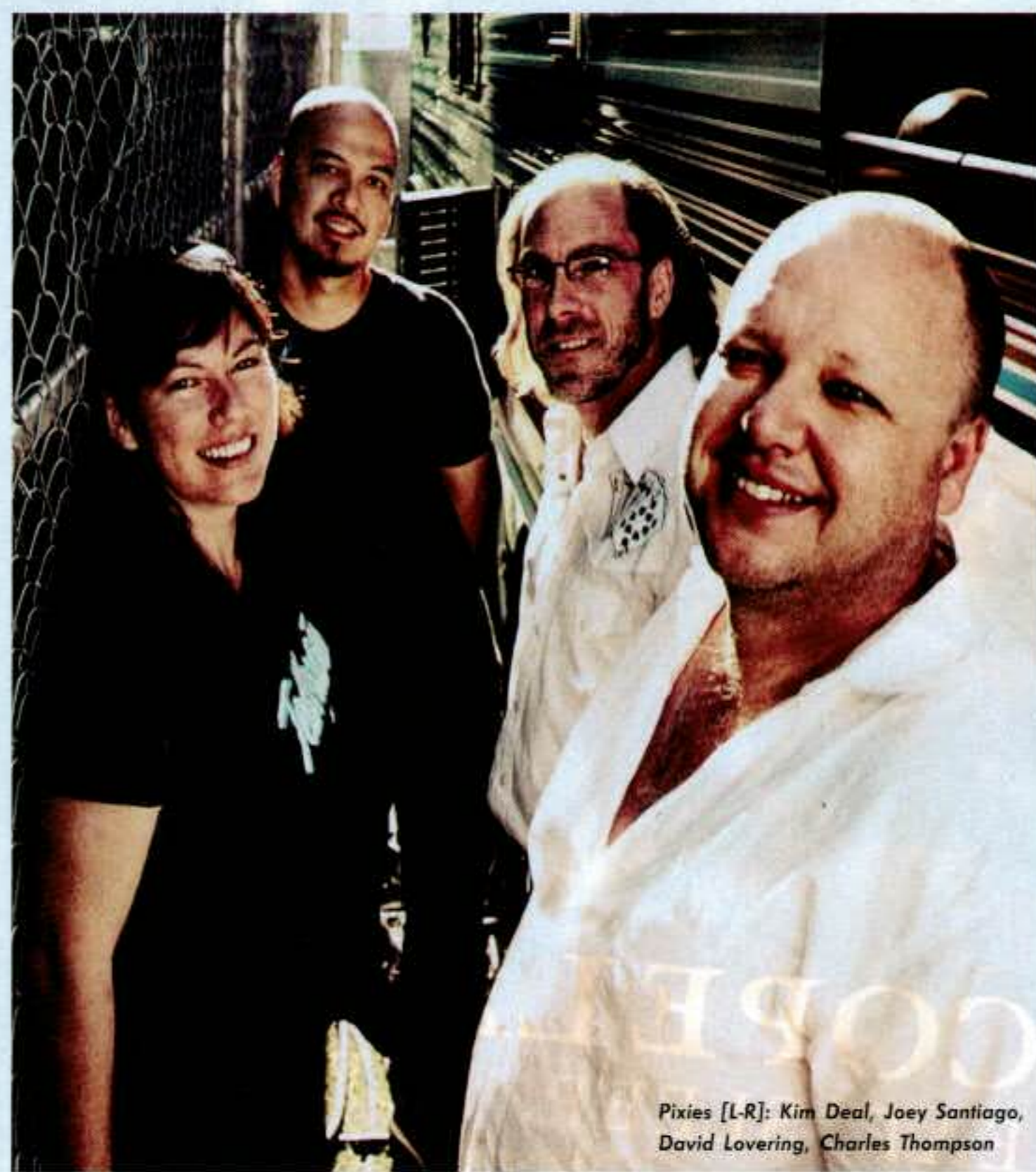
As the band members seem to have no interest in reliving their glory days, and the filmmakers only sparingly incorporate archival footage, very little exposition is included and the uninitiated might not really understand what the fuss is about. The emerging picture is one purely rooted in the present tense.

figure, struggling with his father's death while sinking into valium abuse and unresolved grief. The fact that the band members hardly talk to each other backstage and travel in separate buses indicates that maybe not all the old wounds have healed, but the live performances appear to suffer little because of it.

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moments emerge. Ultimately, it's a more nuanced approach than that of typically superficial tour documentaries, and as the narrative wanders

from hero worship, it ends up at a point where a more human, vulnerable and engaging portrayal comes into focus.



Pixies [L-R]: Kim Deal, Joey Santiago, David Lovering, Charles Thompson