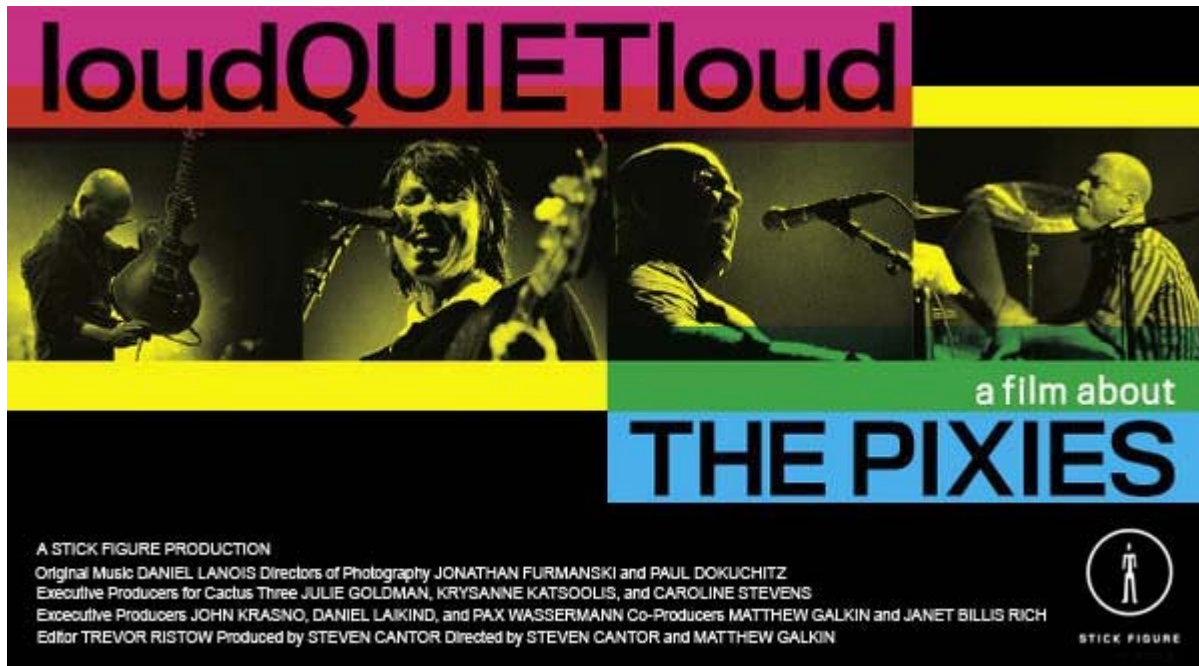


# RetroLowFi

Musings on popular and not-so-popular culture.

**November 21, 2006**

*[loudQUIETloud: A Film About The Pixies \(Steven Cantor/Matthew Galkin 2006\)](#)*



In 2004, Steven Cantor and Matthew Galkin were given unprecedented access to the Pixies universally acclaimed reunion tour. The result of what must have been hours of footage is offered to us in the form of *loudQUIETloud*, and it's exactly what a good portion of Pixies fans have hoped for since, well, 1988 or so. The band - one of the most influential and important musical groups of the last thirty years - did nothing more than drop records that made your head explode for five years, played live shows that seemed like they'd rather be somewhere else, and built up a mystique so thick that it's hard to imagine seeing portly frontman Charles Thompson lying on his hotel bed doing phone interviews clad in nothing but black boxer briefs, or enduring indie darling Kim Deal sitting on her mothers porch working on some needlepoint. But that is exactly what you get with this film: a warts-and-all account of the Pixies onstage putting forth seemingly minimal effort to make extraordinary music, as well as seeing them offstage doing... well, nothing much at all. And that even includes talking to each other.

In most of the backstage footage, the tension between band members is thicker than Marlon Brando's elbow skin as they strive to find something/anything to say to each other. In one scene, Charles tries to do a card trick for the magic-obsessed Pixies drummer David Lovering. He fails, they laugh quickly and follow it up with possibly the most uncomfortable silence in a documentary film this year. So yeah, there's a lot of that. The filmmakers skim the bands backstory and only give the faintest nod to why the band might have broken up in the first place. Instead, they paint a portrait of a group really happy to be back together and even more afraid of performing together. Oh, and of course, that they are all pretty happy about the paychecks they'll be bringing home.

There's also a much-talked about segment in which the band tries its best to have an intervention with Lovering over his valium habit, which is of course placed right after a shambolic live reading of "Something Against You" that finds Lovering continuing to play the same bap-bap-bap beat long after the song has actually ended. The sequence is edited to seem as if the band had simply gotten fed up with his loopy antics and officially decided to confront him, although it may be a bit more dramatic than what actually occurred between the four members. (*side note: Charles Thompson has*

*echoed these same statements, saying that too much emphasis was placed on an ordeal that really wasn't as bad as it seemed. Ah, the magic of editing).*

*loudQUIETloud* allows offers you a glimpse at the freshly squeaky-clean and sober Kim Deal as she gets increasingly mortified at the level of fan worship thrown her way on a daily basis. The films most touching scenes are the loving exchanges between Kim and her identical twin sister Kelley, showing off the most warmth you'll see between two people for the entirety of the eighty-five minute running time. Otherwise, it's just four people looking uncomfortable in their own skin... and some live performances that would be simply phenomenal had the directors not seen fit to drench the clips in looped crowd noise. Guys, I have bootlegs of these shows... people *\*did not\** scream all the way through the songs. It wasn't a Beatles concert, but they sure made it sound as if clubs that held less than 2000 people were stadiums full of teenage girls that had all simultaneously noticed spiders crawling on their legs. C'mon, show the viewer some respect here, right?

All in all, *loudQUIETloud* keeps the Pixies mystery intact while offering you the most cursory - yet probably the most candid - glances into the inner workings of the band. Could've been better, but then again, there's always the chance that there just isn't much of a behind-the-scenes story to be told after all.



[Buy \*loudQUIETloud\* at www.loudquietloud.com.](http://www.loudquietloud.com)

- [Marc](#)

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