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## The Pixies - loudQUIETloud DVD Review

by Patrick Muldowney

Generally band documentaries stem from fans with no direction/production skills, or film students who figure bands are easy fodder for skill-building. When you reach the status of icon, such as The Pixies did during their 12-year hiatus, you have the luxury of keeping company with professional filmmakers. Under the direction of Steven Cantor and Matthew Galkin ("Family Bonds"), fans are treated to *loudQUIETloud*, a documentary from fellow Pixies followers that brings the clarity and sensibility usually reserved for more affluent, and turbulent, bands, like Metallica, to a once marginalized demographic.

Cantor and Galkin openly admit the great difficulty they faced creating this documentary, which has garnered numerous selections from film festivals, most notably Tribeca and South by Southwest. The problem with The Pixies is they lack the extroverts expected from rock 'n roll, so there was no great reunion scene, and barely any points of great tension; all traditional elements of such a story. Understandably, they wanted to make a cohesive, behind-the-scenes look at the 2004 reunion tour, but The Pixies did not naturally lend themselves to such an eye. Regardless, Cantor and Galkin adjusted, and

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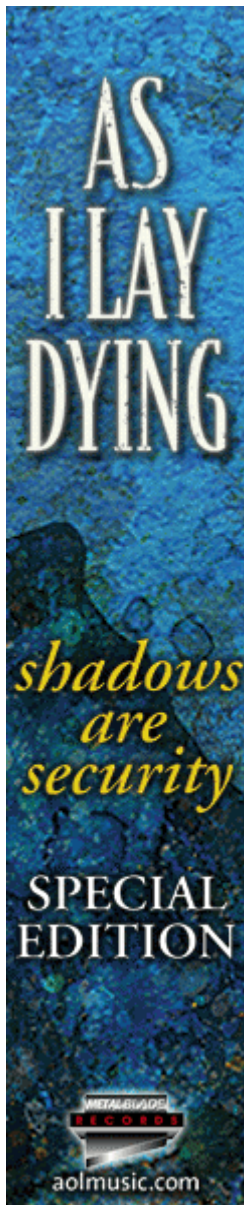
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found that the true story was in what all Pixies' fans missed: the band performing together. One of the great beauties of this documentary is the live footage of performances like Brixton, England, and Chicago.

Initially caught up in the hype of the reunion, like many of us, Cantor and Galkin may have felt that they did not delve into the band enough personally, but for those who are a little more perceptive, there is a great deal going on psychologically, and the conclusions that can be drawn can be largely credited to how the scenes are arranged and edited. It is initially great to witness that The Pixies meant as much, if not more, to each member, as it did to the many listeners who struggled with their absence. David Lovering, the drummer, who was living from couch to couch as a struggling magician when Joe (Santiago) called him to share the reunion news said he "must have jumped ten feet in the air." Joey Santiago, now a family man, saw this as a chance for security since he had been existing by picking up freelance jobs (he's scoring another documentary during this one). Kim Deal's mother is excited that her daughter, who was living back at their house after overcoming alcohol addiction, will do more than stay in bed all day. Frank Black seems the most unaffected by the reunion, but as the documentary wears on there are many clues to suggest that these moments may mean the most to him.

Whether the cameras are following: Frank Black's inner struggles with self-doubt, sometimes masked by arrogance; Kim Deal's difficulty understanding and accepting her popularity; David Lovering's childlike charm, which turns destructive when he loses his father during the tour; Joey Santiago's quiet stability; *loudQUIETloud* allows you to care, and sometimes worry, about the individuals who form The Pixies. It is upsetting to watch Lovering keep playing long after the bands stops playing "Something Against You", because the pills and wine he uses while mourning his father finally catch up with him onstage, and to later see a flood of tears that won't fall when the band stages an informal intervention. You'll want to reach into the screen as Kim repeatedly downs bottles of NA beer, just to make sure it's still NA in her hand. You'll want to invite Joe over for dinner, and ask him to be your best friend. You'll want to ask Frank Black why he can't step up

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and lead this band, with whom he intermittently shows tenderness, which so desperately needs his presence. Great documentaries are generally filled with moments of joy, sadness, and frustration, and *loudQUIETloud* is no exception.

One possible criticism of Cantor and Galkin stems from the bonus footage. Many of the scenes provided are so valuable to Pixies' fans; it is perplexing that they did not make the documentary. The scene with Mr. John Murphy, Kim's first husband, or when Frank sees Melissa, his first serious girlfriend, who we know as "Missy Agitation" from "Gouge Away", provides a better idea of the extended family the band has left behind, and would work better as a side story than the awkward teenager who worships Kim Deal, and has a garage band who plays Pixies' tunes. The moment where she's in the front row and gets a pick at the end seems really staged and trite compared to the sincerity of the documentary as a whole. Sometimes a gift can be a bit of a curse, in that the experience that allows this to be professional, couldn't help but add a little godlike hand to shape the story. Isn't that the allure of reality TV? Regardless, the curse is small, and the gift of *loudQUIETloud* is substantial.

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