

VANCOUVER SUN

The Final 24

Cineflix/MVD Visual ***

Ever wondered what happened to singer Janis Joplin in her final hours? Or Keith Moon, the hard-partying drummer for The Who?

Speculate no more. A series of one-hour documentaries from Cineflix and MVD Visual revisits the final 24 hours in the lives of famous folks, complete with a 24-hour clock winding backwards and a narrator who says ominously, "Drum legend Keith Moon only has 18 hours left to live."

Using file footage, stock photos and re-enactments with actors, these documentaries put the lives of the characters in context - The Who, with their instrument smashing and explosive antics on stage, "were the godfathers of punk"; Joplin, a plain-Jane teenager bullied in high school, became two people at once - a hard-living tough girl, and a vulnerable kid sensitive to what others said about her.

Both were done in by their lifestyle - Moon overdosed on the alcoholism withdrawal drug heminevrin, and Joplin's final escort was a lethal dose of heroin that was 50 per cent pure.

Other figure examined in The Final 24 series include Nicole Brown Simpson and Gianni Versace. Next month, the series looks at the ends of Sid Vicious, John Belushi, Anna Nicole Smith and David Koresh, and later releases will examine River Phoenix, Marvin Gaye, Hunter S. Thompson, John F. Kennedy Jr., Jim Morrison and Tupac Shakur.

- Marke Andrews