

**Dexter Romweber: Two Headed Cow** ★★1/2

(2006) 78 min. DVD: \$16.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors).

Tony Gayton's reflective documentary focuses on Dexter Romweber of North Carolina's Flat Duo Jets, a punk-inspired rockabilly band. Exene Cervenka describes their music as "hardcore Americana," while Jack White admiringly says, "[Romweber] didn't care what people thought about him." Romweber himself cites 1950s rock 'n' roll, tragic poets, and "destructive role models" such as Baudelaire, as influences. After releasing their 1988 debut, the Flat Duo Jets toured with the Cramps and gained a national reputation, but after signing to a major label, Romweber's relationship with long-limbed drummer Chris "Crow" Smith fell apart (Romweber claims that his friend stole tour proceeds, though Smith doesn't get the chance to tell his side of the story here). Gayton's black-and-white archival footage reveals Romweber as a musician with a propensity to drink, smoke, and ramble like a dime-store philosopher. In the contemporary sequences—shot in color—the chain-smoking singer talks about his odd jobs, medications, and special connection to the spiritual world (something he drones on about for a little too long). Other speakers include Neko Case, Chan Marshall (aka Cat Power), and Romweber's youthful-looking mother. While there's no doubt that Romweber is committed to his craft, his story often comes across as more dispiriting than inspiring. Still, this should be considered a strong optional purchase. Aud: C, P. (K. Fennesy)

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FOLLOWS ALMOST TWENTY YEARS OF
DEXTER ROMWEBER OF THE FLAT DUO JETS