



Dinosaur Jr Live at 9:30 Club: In the Hands of the Fans

Directed by Dave Markey

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By Ian GormelyDinosaur Jr. are one of the least gimmicky bands around, so the idea that this gig at Washington, DC's 9:30 Club was shot by six fans watching from the audience is a little out of synch, not to mention a bit of a rip-off of the Beastie Boys' *Awesome; I Fuckin' Shot That*. But with Dave Markey (the man behind legendary tour doc *1991: The Year Punk Broke*) running the show, *In the Hands of the Fans* comes across as a pretty terrific document of Dinosaur's past, as seen through the eyes of their surprisingly fruitful reunion. The impetus behind all this of, course, was a 2011 tour where the trio – singer/guitarist J Mascis, bassist/singer Lou Barlow and drummer Murph – chose to play their third and arguably most beloved album, *Bug*, in its entirety, which the group execute with aplomb. The film captures the ferocious presence of the band onstage, even while Mascis sways back and forth, whipping out face-melting guitar solos as if he were turning the page in a magazine. The handheld footage from the fans looks surprisingly good and as back-up, Markey set up a number of stationary cams around the stage, which when paired together, do a great job documenting the performance. Their set includes performances of "Sludgefeast" and "Raisins" tacked onto the end – *Bug* is, after all, just 35 minutes long, and "In a Jar" and

"the Wagon" appear as DVD extras. Backstage interviews with the lucky fans picked to film the show prove somewhat awkward, but Henry Rollins' onstage chat with the band pre-show about Dinosaur's early days is interesting, even if Mascis stays pretty silent throughout. Mike Watt, Ian Mackaye and Keith Morris, whose band OFF! were opening the tour, all provide testimonials and Markey even gets a brief solo interview with Mascis outside the venue before sound check. Put together, this all makes for a surprisingly robust and well executed release, when the whole exercise could have come across as a between tour/album cash grab. This is for both casual and serious Dinosaur fans alike. (MVD)

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