



## Music Movie Mondays: DERAILROADED: Inside The Mind Of Larry "Wild Man" Fischer

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March 21st, 2011 4:46 pm ET

This week's installment of Music Movie Mondays we take a look inside the occasionally delightful, but usually disturbed mind of Larry "Wild Man" Fischer in the documentary DERAILROADED available tomorrow from retailers everywhere.

DERAILROADED follows Larry "Wild Man" Fischer's encounters in the music business, that ranged anywhere from amusing to downright upsetting. Institutionalized as a manic depressive paranoid schizophrenic at 16 after attacking his mother with a knife, Fischer wandered the streets of L.A. singing his unique songs for 10 cents each to passersby. He was discovered by [Frank Zappa](#), with whom he cut his first record album, including the enduring dada rock classic "Merry Go Round." As arguably precursor to punk, Fischer became an underground club and concert favorite, earning him the ubiquitous title of "godfather of outsider music." Over his 40 year career, Fischer has performed constantly, is the first artist ever recorded on Rhino Records, was featured on "Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In," had a hit in the UK on John Peel's Festive Fifty, was the subject of his own comic book, was a mainstay on the Dr. Demento Show, and even sang a duet with the late Rosemary Clooney. In tracing his life and career through archival footage and interviews with family, friends and musical colleagues like Frank Zappa, Mark Mothersbaugh of Devo and Weird Al Yankovic we truly understand what it means to be DERAILROADED.

Much like the works of [Daniel Johnston](#) and [Wesley Willis](#), other notable musicians who suffer from mental health issues, the songs of "Wild Man" Fischer certainly aren't for everyone but these songs with their raw emotional natures have a genuine quality that helped to develop him a genuine fan base in the field of outsider music. Anyone interviewed talks about the "Wild Man" not only with genuine love, but also with a little bit of fear not knowing if they were dealing with the pleasant man riding high on what he would call "Triple Pep" or the manic depressive convinced he was being followed and the subject of assassination plots who could and often would physically attack anyone near him. This film is an unmedicated and uncensored look at the often grim picture that mental illness can paint and toll it takes on those caught up in it.

Extras on this disc include Deleted Scenes, Outtakes, an interview with Rudy Ray Moore (aka Dolemite) and Commentary Tracks from the filmmakers and the "Wild Man" himself.

In the day to day trials that make up everyday life, it is genuinely hard to find the legitimate self-expression

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that is traditionally exclusive to the hubris of youth. I knew nothing about him but in the “Wild Man” we see what we miss and are not only fascinated but even a little bit envious of this characteristic that he holds on to. We are also saddened by the price he has had to pay, with his day to day struggles to simply exist in a world he doesn’t understand. His musical background is the selling point that gets us to turn this film on, but in the grand scheme of it all this is the portrait of a man and the struggles that mental illness can create, and it is very rare when a filmmaker can make us feel such a broad spectrum of emotions all inside of an 86 minute time span.

4 out of 5 stars.

DERAILROADED: Inside The Mind of Larry “Wild” Man Fischer should be available at video stores across Toronto, click [here](#) for more details. If not I’d recommend trying an online retailer like [seeofsound.com](#), in order to check out this truly original portrait of a Rock N Roll legend, if only in his own mind.

**Tags:** [movie review](#), [Wild Man Fischer](#), [Frank Zappa](#), [Devo](#), [artists with mental illness](#)