

<http://www.markprindle.com/fischer.htm#derailroaded>

## Derailroaded: Inside the Mind of Larry “Wild Man” Fischer DVD – MVD/Ubun Twinz Productions 2011 \*



This excellent 2005 film gives you everything you could possibly want or expect from a “Wild Man” Fischer documentary, and sugarcoats nothing. The filmmakers do a brilliant job of creating a funny yet tragic narrative through music, archival footage and recent interviews with friends, enemies, family and “Wild Man” himself. In doing so, they make it brutally clear why, as charming and funny as he can be, he inevitably alienates anybody who tries to befriend him. As a result of his manic depression and paranoid schizophrenia, to quote his brother David, “He’s unpredictable, and he gets on your nerves!”

Interviewees include Mark Mothersbaugh, Barnes & Barnes, Dr. Demento, “Weird Al” Yankovic, Gail Zappa, Solomon Burke (who gave Larry his “Wild Man” nickname!), Larry’s brother David and friends ‘Freak’ and ‘Fugly the Clown,’ *Songs in the Key of ‘Z’* author Irwin Chusid, *Real Stuff* comic book writer Dennis Eicchorn, a psychologist of some sort, and Rhino Records founders Harold Bronson and Richard Foos. Almost all of them have disturbing stories to tell about their interactions with Mr. Crazy Pants, usually involving insane paranoid rages. Example: Fischer heard Yankovic’s “I’ll Be Mellow When I’m Dead,” misheard the line “Like wow man, can you relate?” as “Like ‘Wild Man,’ can you relate?” and became obsessed with the idea that “Weird Al” was plotting to kill him. (In the film, “Weird Al” assures the viewer that this was not the case!)

The doc also includes archival footage of Larry throughout the different periods of his life, including childhood (when, according to his brother, he had no friends and spent most of his time singing in his room), the Zappa ‘60s (including a rare, awful semi-duet between the two!), the Rhino ‘70s and the Barnes & Barnes ‘80s. It’s intriguing to watch his looks change from youthful freak to mustachioed loser to unkempt bearded old man as his grizzly caveman voice remains the same.

However, what’s most intriguing (and most controversial) is the present day footage of Fischer, a disturbing mixture of boastful mania, bitter depression and unnerving paranoia that perfectly illustrates everything the other interviewees have said about him throughout the film. Some viewers have accused the filmmakers of exploiting his fragile mental state in order to make a more gripping movie, but honestly – if you’re going to make a documentary about “Wild Man” Fischer, you have to interview him. And this fragile, panicked and angry man is *who he is*.

SPOILER: It has a bittersweet ending.

If you have any interest at all in “Weird Man” Yankofisch, you must see this film. The revelations are many, and the final scenes will leave you demanding a Five-Year Update.

SPOILER: I pooped in your sock drawer.

Wait no, that was a SOILER.

Which reminds me: you know that Pink Floyd song “Hey You”? I found the original demo the other day and you wouldn’t believe it – Roger Waters originally sang the final verse like this:

“Hey Jude  
A song by Paul McCartney

Sounds so good, it makes me fartney  
Can you smell me?

Hey Jude  
He plays it on piano  
Hawaii Five-0, 'Book him Danno'  
Can you smell me?

Hey Jude  
The ending goes 'Na-na-na-naaaa-aaaa-aaaall!'  
Together we stand  
Come suck on my balls! (My balls! My balls! My balls! My balls! My balls!)

Can you believe it!? And then he went and CHANGED everything! That whole bit about breaking bottles, who needs it? Who needs ANY of it? Bring back the original lyrics, Roger! Do it for your father, who I have it from reliable sources died in the war!