

MONDAY, JULY 23, 2012

Alice Donut - "Freaks in Love: A Quarter Century in Underground Rock" DVD Review (MVD Visual)

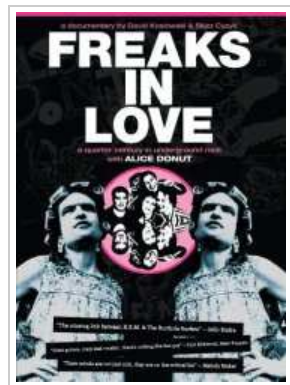


AlternativeTentacles
Alice Donut- No More Room

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Aquarius Records, who have a huge number of CD reviews posted on their site wrote "With the release of *Freaks In Love*, from weirdo New York noise rockers Alice Donut, we realized we had never reviewed a single Alice Donut record. Ever." I sort of feel the same way as *Freaks in Love* is my first exposure to both Alice Donut and their music.

Freaks in Love is an in-depth documentary that looks at the 25-year career of New York City punk rock band Alice Donut. The documentary runs just over 90 minutes and the bonus features include nine live songs that range from a 1987 performance at CBGB to footage from the band's 2009 reunion show at Southpaw. Alice Donut recorded their early discs for Alternative Tentacles and Jello Biafra described the band's music as "the missing link between

R.E.M. and the Butthole Surfers".

I'm not sure I agree with Jello's description as there is nothing that sounds like R.E.M.'s "The One I Love" included on the movie soundtrack. In fact, Alice Donut's free-form psychedelic punk and Tom Antona's garbled vocals (along with lyrics about the "perversities, odd details, and petty humiliations of life") sounds closer in spirit to mid-period Butthole Surfers (who seemed to drop their psychotic edge after Teresa Nervosa left the band). Alice Donut's song "'The Son Of A Disgruntled Ex-Postal Worker Reflects On His Life While Getting Stoned In The Parking Lot Of A Winn Dixie Listening To Metallica'" says a lot about where the band's headset is.

CONTACT INFO.

MIKE

Contact me at: 166 Allen Street, #56
New York, NY 10002-2110

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▼ July (22)

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- Alice Donut - "Freaks in Love: A Quarter Century i...
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- Cobalt & the Hired Guns: Chicago Pop-Punk Band Pla...
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- Future of What - "Moonstruck" CDEP Review
- New Rides of the Furious Swampriders CD Review

- ▶ June (13)
- ▶ May (20)
- ▶ April (7)
- ▶ March (33)
- ▶ February (41)
- ▶ January (32)

- ▶ 2011 (353)
- ▶ 2010 (431)
- ▶ 2009 (383)
- ▶ 2008 (337)
- ▶ 2007 (431)
- ▶ 2006 (113)

The film starts with interviews with current and former members about the band's beginnings on the Lower East Side which is mixed with some live footage of the band's first show at CBGB. The band's story is a familiar DIY story where the members spent most of their life in the van building mini-markets in various cities around the globe. The band wears their "freak flag" proudly with the introduction of cross-dressing friend Chet Mazur, who both opened for Donut with spoken word performances and was the 'cover model' for *Mule*. While keeping their indie-cred, Donut built a strong following through progressively higher-profile tours with bands that included Blind Melon and the Meat Puppets. It seems that the pinnacle of the band's popularity was when they played the main stage at Reading Festival (and Donut went on after Primus, who seemed hugely popular at the time).

Unlike the bands on VH1's "Behind the Music", there is a minimum of inner-band drama as the members all seem to get along and actually like being around each other. Ted and Dave left the band due to "pent up frustrations" but there seemed to be no bad blood between the members. Donut called it a day in 1996 to which Jello commented that the band "broke up before they sucked". The band members all went off and took real jobs but slowly came back together in '01 and Ted and Dave rejoined a few years later.

MUSIC LINKS

- Blabbermouth
- Braveworlds.com > Where Metal Lives!
- Rock Concert Tickets
- SMN News > Heavy Metal News
- Woodstock.com
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BROOKLYN CLUBS

- Music Hall of Williamsburg
 - Southpaw
 - The Trash Bar
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Given the pull of 'real life' (Tom and Sissi are married and have kids), Alice Donut is quasi-inactive but the band released their tenth disc, *Ten Glorious Animals*, in September 2009 and played a very

limited set of tour dates in support of the disc.

Freaks in Love was directed by musicians/film makers David Koslowski (x-Liquor Bike <http://www2.citypaper.com/eat/review.asp?rid=13899>) and Skizz Cyzyk (x-Berserk) who give a 'front-row' view of what it was like for an indie band in the pre-Nirvana era to 'get in the van'. In an interview with MUSICFILMWEB (MFW), Skizz was asked:

MFW: Why Alice Donut? As in, why as a movie subject?

Skizz Cyzyk: Considering I was already in the middle of another music doc (Icepick to the Moon, about Reverend Fred Lane) and another doc about antiwar protesters (Hit & Stay), the last thing I expected to do was jump into another project. But my co-director, David Koslowski, had moved to North Carolina, where he became friends with Tom [Antona] and Sissi [Schulmeister, Alice Donut's bassist]. They mentioned wanting a doc made to coincide with the band's 25th anniversary. David decided he wanted to make it, and he asked me to make it with him. Their story could be the story of a lot of bands, and that is a story that hasn't been told much. Everyone knows about the bands who made it huge, but not everyone knows about the bands who worked really hard yet stayed beneath the surface. For that reason Alice Donut seemed like a good band to make a documentary about.

Links:

[Alice Donut](#)

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