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STRANGE THINGS ARE HAPPENING

TIGHT

DVD. Wild Eye



You can't knock the idea behind **Tight**. Take four porn stars, put them together as a rock band and then throw them on the road less than a week later. Sit back and watch the chaos.

If you are familiar with 'structured reality' shows – where the 'reality' is enhanced with scripted (or at least staged) scenes – then **Tight** won't seem all that unusual. Very much in that TV style that mixes fact and fiction (and referred to on the cover as a 'mockumentary'), this is a story that is staged and manipulated, often with entirely scripted scenes, mixed in with some surprisingly raw reality. The band – industry veteran Monica Mayhem as singer, cute Layla Labelle on guitar, wild Tuesday Cross on bass and aggressive Alicia Andrews on drums – are a volatile mix of personalities that would probably never get past a couple of rehearsals in the real world, and as they go on a ham-fistedly put together tour of strip clubs and small bars in places like Denver, divisions are uncovered, alliances formed and tensions pushed to breaking point, helped by booze and the worst road manager imaginable. There are screaming matches, physical assaults, tears and drunken debauchery, and **Tight** arguably pack more rock 'n' roll madness into a few weeks than most bands manage in their whole careers.

This is the reality. What the film also has are several clearly staged incidents. Bree Olsen, as the band's entirely useless manager, is clearly there as a name to sell the film on and to provide some comic relief, as is her 'cousin' Joel, the most spectacularly useless person you could imagine. These set up scenes, alongside the talking head interviews that intersperse and comment on events, will be very familiar to anyone who has suffered their way through **Jersey Shore** or **This is Chelsea** (which this is *much* better than, by the way). Less familiar perhaps will be the brief softcore interludes as the band interact with groupies, bouncers or engage in porn shoots to pay the bills between gigs.

As a long time documentary obsessive who also has a love of the manipulative Mondo genre, I'm in two minds about stuff like this. We all know that even the most sincere documentary will ultimately be authored, and that staged (or at least manipulated) footage is not unusual. You could argue that a film by, say, Errol Morris, is just as 'unreal' as this, albeit in a very different way. But the blatantly staged sex scenes are rather distracting, and ultimately, you have to distrust the validity of everything you see here – even though some of it seems very raw. And that's a pity, because I think you could get a *great* documentary just from the central conceit here, without the scripted stuff. The film works best when documenting very real tension.



As for the band – well, they are not great. But not awful, especially given the fact that they had barely a week to get together and learn their songs. Hell, I doubt many inexperienced bands would be up to the task, and believe me, I've heard worse. Mayhem seems out of place – not only is she a decade older than the other girls, but she's the only one who *looks* like a porn star, and who can't leave it behind on stage, much to the dismay of Labelle, who actually seems to take the music side seriously. Attempts at credibility are not helped by Mayhem getting her tits out, lap dancing audience members or (in a move swiped from *Rockbitch*) tossing a 'golden condom' into the audience, the lucky recipient getting to go back stage to get laid.

Tight allegedly still exist – minus Mayhem, who has been replaced with Kelly Jean – though there doesn't appear to be much activity on the horizon. Maybe this release will kick-start them into another tour!

The DVD is loaded with extras – a bucket load of deleted scenes, a couple of truly dreadful music videos, live footage and more, rounded up a solid package.

DAVID FLINT

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