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Color Me Obsessed: A Film About The Replacements (2011)

MVD Visual

DVD Released: 11/20/2012

All Ratings out of 

Movie:  1/2

Video: 

Audio: 

Extras: 

Review by Mike Long, Posted on 12/4/2012

When I was growing up, one of the great things about being a fan of alternative music was the feeling that you had discovered a secret and that it was something specific to you. The bad thing was that you often felt like the only person who had heard of certain band and there was no one with which to discuss the music. In addition, outside of magazine articles, it was often difficult to learn anything about bands. This idea probably seems pretty foreign in an age where you can find a discussion board on just about any topic on-line. **Color Me Obsessed: A Film About The Replacements** takes us back to those days, as the film intends to create a huge conversation about the band from Minneapolis.

Humans have always loved to tell stories and the oral tradition goes back to the dawn of man, when the earliest people would describe their lives to one another. This grew into true story-telling, which was handed down through the generations. Director Gorman Bechard has dug deep into this tradition with **Color Me Obsessed**, as he's gathered dozens of people to talk about The Replacements. From musicians to journalists to associates to everyday fans, Bechard compiled hundreds of hour of interviews and edited it down to this two hour film which explores the history of the band. Beginning with the formation of the band, the speakers describe the original members – Paul Westerberg, Bob Stinson, Tommy Stinson, and Chris Mars – and discuss how they formed their sound and what their roots were like. From there, there is a discussion of the bands highs and lows (mostly lows), as each album is analyzed. The story ends with the band's breakup and how their music influenced a generation of rock fans.

This sounds like a dream come for fans of The Replacements, right? Not so fast. You see, while the oral tradition has been around for millennia, about 40,000 years ago, humans also began using illustrations to tell stories. This helped to add a visual representation to the tale, thus helping to bring it to life. Movies should be the perfect marriage of sight and sound, as we can hear stories being told and see examples of what is being described.

Bechard has opted to abandon this idea for **Color Me Obsessed** and the result is one of the worst documentaries ever made. The movie doesn't contain any comments or interviews with The Replacements themselves, whether that be modern or archive. OK, so maybe he didn't have access to the band or these materials. But, the movie also contains no music by The Replacements, no concert footage, no album covers, and no photos of the band. To paraphrase my favorite line from **Jurassic Park**, "Are there going to be any Replacements in your Replacements documentary?"

So, this raises the question, "How is **Color Me Obsessed** any different from standing around at the local indie record store talking with the cashier about The Replacements?" The answer is, it's not. If that's something which appeals to you, then fine, but most will be stymied by the apparent ineptitude of this film, which rebels against common sense. When someone describes a song, or how great a riff was, or an album cover, we expect/deserve to hear or see an example of what they are talking about, but we don't get anything like that here. So, if you aren't familiar with the song being described, you are out of luck. In this sense, **Color Me Obsessed** plays like the ultimate insider piece, as you will be left out in the cold if you don't have the limited live cassette from the mid-80s. The movie also features awkward moments like the text which reads "(Bob Stinson) didn't die of a drug overdose, as most assume." But, it doesn't tell us what did kill him.

I became a fan of The Replacements in 1987 when a record store employee suggested I give them a try. So, I was already a bit late to the band's raucous party. Thus, I was looking forward to **Color Me Obsessed**, as I wanted to learn more about the band. To be honest, I did learn a few things, but I can only imagine what it would have been like if I could have seen Tommy Stinson's clothing which was being described or heard cuts from the more obscure songs. As it stands, **Color Me Obsessed** is only half a documentary.

Color Me Obsessed left me feeling black and white on DVD courtesy of MVD Visual. The film has been letterboxed at 1.78:1 and the transfer is enhanced for 16 x 9 TVs. The image is sharp and clear, showing no grain or defects from the source material. The interviews were conducted in various locations, and save for those done in darker areas, they look fine. The DVD carries a Dolby stereo audio track which provides clear dialogue. We have no trouble understanding the individuals being interviewed, and there's no hissing or distortion on the track.

The **Color Me Obsessed** DVD contains a host of extras, spread out across two DVDs. Disc 1 contains an AUDIO COMMENTARY from Director Gorman Bechard, and a second COMMENTARY from Producer Jan Radder. We get 19 DELETED SCENES which contains additional interview materials with various speakers. Disc 2 kicks off with a 76-minute interview with Bechard where he describes the making of and his approach to the movie. We also get a 10-minute interview with Co-Producer Hansi Oppenheimer, who thought up the whole idea. The complete, uncut interviews with Grant Hart (3 hours 11 minutes), Greg Kot & Jim Derogatis (2 hours 3 minutes), and Robert Christgau (1 hour 6 minutes). The final extras are 4 TRAILER for the movie.

Review by [Mike Long](#). Copyright 2012.