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Wednesday, November 21, 2012

### Random Film of the Week: COLOR ME OBSESSED: A Film About The Replacements



For a film that hasn't a *single* second of their music, zero interviews with surviving band members and only briefly shows a few photos of the band at its ending, **COLOR ME OBSESSED: A Film About The Replacements** manages to be one of the best documentaries on any subject I've seen this year. Whether or not you agree with the "Best Band Ever" status the Replacements have among their most avid fans, director Gorman Bechard (a seriously obsessed fan of the band himself) makes the case for this haughty title thanks to a series of outstanding interviews with their their peers of the period (fellow musicians and producers, that is), die-hard fans young and old and even a few Hollywood types, all who reveal their love (and sometimes hate) for the band as the film progresses.

Like any great music documentary, COLOR ME OBSESSED will make you want to track down the band's back catalog of releases because the stories you'll see told about their work are more than compelling enough to make you want to create a playlist based on the songs and albums discussed. One very cool thing here is how Bechard compares each of their releases to the biggest selling albums of the year they were released in. You'll find out that compared to top acts of the time, the "Mats never sold a ton of albums throughout their history, but the loyal fan base and critical acclaim they received all added to their legendary status. At least as far as their recorded works...


As a live act, The Replacements were either the best band you'd see or the worst depending on what the band was consuming before a show and how the crowds reacted to their near obsessive penchant for outrageous performances, a tendency to blast out all sorts of cover tunes when the audience wanted to hear their favorite hits and a few other quirks. All of the descriptions of those live shows that broke down for any number of reasons are great, adding a "you were there" feeling that's humorous, yet makes you feel a bit bad for someone who decided to bring a few friends to a show who'd never seen the band play live before.

Some of the funnier bits are the stories of how the band became only one of five in the history of Saturday Night Live to be banned from the show for life. It may have been a case of performance art gone haywire or the band displaying the usual attitude of rockers committed to leaving their mark on an unfortunate green room (or hotel or other place where outrageous behavior led to mass destruction of physical property). But it's definitely weird and hilarious yet poignant, given that the band was going through a few shifts that would see one member leave and the album quality drop off as time went on. Interestingly enough, all of their indie and major label work has fans that will stick up for each release as being superb or at least quite memorable thanks mostly to Paul Westerberg's constant maturity as a songwriter.

The two-disc set features the film, many deleted scenes and commentary on the first DVD, while a few trailers, extensive interviews with the director and extended interviews with a few important folks (the Robert Christgau interview is priceless) take up the second disc. And yes, you get an answer to why Bechard chose not to include any music, videos or interviews with the band here - it's a doozy of a response because it makes perfect sense while also kicking nearly every other rock doc in the balls that relies so heavily on archival footage and superstar talent in front of or behind the lens. It may not change your mind one way or the other about the many classic

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genre documentaries you've seen, but you'll appreciate Bechard's vision here all the more.

So yeah - buy this film and be prepared to be totally entertained even if you've never heard a note from the band. As noted, that's going to change soon enough...

Posted by [Greg Wilcox](#) at 6:05 PM

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[Gorman Bechard](#) November 22, 2012 8:26 AM

Thank you, Greg, for the kind words...and especially for "getting it." A very nice way to start my Thanksgiving day. -- Gorman Bechard

[Reply](#)

[Greg Wilcox](#) November 23, 2012 2:41 PM

You're welcome! It's definitely an innovative way to look at a subject and thanks to the interviews being SO precise and well edited, it's easy to see how and why the 'Mats were so huge among their many fans.

g.

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