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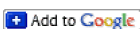
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Stone Roses - Made Of Stone

[MVD Entertainment Group](#) // Unrated // December 3, 2013**List Price: \$19.95 [Buy now and save at [Amazon](#)]**

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Review by [Bill Gibron](#) | posted January 1, 2014 | [E-mail the Author](#)

THE FILM:

It's one thing to be named "the next big thing" by the media. The press are always looking to anoint the heirs to the mantle manufactured by The Beatles, Alfred Hitchcock, or Stephen King. Sometimes, the sentiment is so misguided (One Direction as the Fab Four's post-modern equivalent? Bullsh*t!!!) you have to laugh. In other cases, the artist and its audience actually believes the shortsighted hype, resulting in a kind of perfect storm of self-aggrandizing. Such is the case with The Stone Roses. After all, the opening track on their debut album was titled "I Wanna Be Adored" and they really believed they deserved such adulation. From their humble roots to their ever expanding egos, this was a band who believed ever piece written about them, and when there was nothing in print, they made up their own myths. By the time songs like "She Bangs the Drum" and "Elephant Stone" were racing up the UK charts, they were already hating their cultural and commercial status - and each other. After their next LP - non-ironically entitled *Second Coming* - failed to inspire more fawning, they broke up, leaving many crazed fans in their wake.

One such obsessive was British filmmaker Shane Meadows (**This is England**). In the 16 years between appearances, the director was determined to see his beloved band back together, though few outside such fandom thought it possible. Guitarist - and primary songwriter - John Squire made it very clear that a reunion was out of the question and lead vocalist Ian Brown appeared equally defiant and determined about any attempt at recapturing old glories. Still, time, and the easing of tempers, prevailed and a series of reconnecting phone calls fueled rumors of a Roses comeback. In 2011, Meadows heard this news and offered to film the rehearsals for their eventual three night unveiling to their home base of Manchester (and Heaton Park). In between, he included a history of the band, their school chum origins and ridiculous self-righteousness with the press. While this is no in-depth *Behind the Music* unmasking, **Made of Stone** does show a group of guys - including original bassist Gary "Mani" Mounfield and drummer Alan "Reni" Wren - reconnecting through the one concept that brought them together in the first place - music.

Like any raving fanboy, Meadows lacks any real distance from his subject. This is a love letter, not a legitimate career overview. The early arrogance is touched on, but the downward spiral into drugs and the public feuding are glossed over in favor of four guys, nearly two decades removed from their previous reverence, trying to recapture same. Early on, the quartet sets up in a small cottage in the English countryside and almost immediately start shuffling through the gorgeous song off their first album, "Waterfall." Sure, the vocals waver and the harmonies lack the ethereal nature of the recording, but this is no Stone Roses cover band. This is the real deal and Meadows makes sure we see this time and time again. As Squire and Brown discuss their history together (in accents so thick it will take a bit of getting used to) we see how the group came together. In essence, both men wanted attention and the appreciation of their peers, and rock 'n' roll was their way of achieving same. Becoming overnight superstars was not really part of the process, and the pressures placed on them by both the record company(s) and the public became unbearable.

As a result, so did the Roses. Songs like "I Am the Resurrection" and "This is the One" exposed the band's growing Messiah complex, and their label as founders of the "Madchester" sound only made matter worse. Battling with their indie label of a naive contract lead to a five year lull between records, which in rock years is several lifetimes. Absence did not make fans hearts grow fonder, and as a result, the breakup was bitter and incredibly acrimonious. For **Made of Stone** and Meadows, that's all wasted water under a long deconstructed bridge. The current configuration has its minor dust-ups, but just like Lips and Robb Reiner in **Anvil: The Story of Anvil**, this once mighty musical act is simply happy that people haven't forgotten them and that there music still has meaning in our current culture. They're not a nostalgia act so much as a formidable force that got sidetracked for 20 years. If you're a Roses fan - and I am - you'll enjoy this film immensely. If you're digging for dirt, however, this plot provided very little indeed.

THE DVD:

When you consider the amount and variety of archival footage used, the visual aspect of **Made of Stone** is surprisingly sound. The 1.78:1 anamorphic widescreen image is colorful and the newer material is sharp and crisp. Some of the older elements are suspect, but overall, this is an excellent transfer. On the sound side of things, we get a Dolby Digital 5.1 mix which is excellent, especially in the concert sequences. Just another warning about the accents - these guys lay the British brogue on quite thick, and without subtitles, you'll have to adjust your brain to same.

As for added content, director Meadows and his producer Mark Herbert have a fit revisiting their time with the Roses. This commentary track is the very definition of fan fawning, and it's infectious. We don't learn a lot about the movie's making. We do get a clear picture of how much these guys love The Stone Roses. There's also a Behind the Scenes featurette, additional looks at the rehearsal process, some fan phone footage, and bonus live performances of "She Bangs the Drum," "Shoot You Down," and "I Wanna Be Adored."

FINAL THOUGHTS:

From the opening strains of their debut album to the blink and you'd miss it moment when the entire Madchester movement when pear-shaped, The Stone Roses rode a wave of defiant dysfunction that guaranteed their place in the hearts of the fanatical and the fascinated. **Made of Stone** showcases their triumphant return while avoiding some of the stains their legacy left behind. Earning an easy **Highly Recommended** rating it's great to see the guys back together and trying to make it work. Twenty years ago, they believed that all they had to do was turn on their amps and open their mouths and magic would automatically occur. Now, with perspective, we see that there is more to making music than being talented.

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