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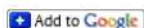
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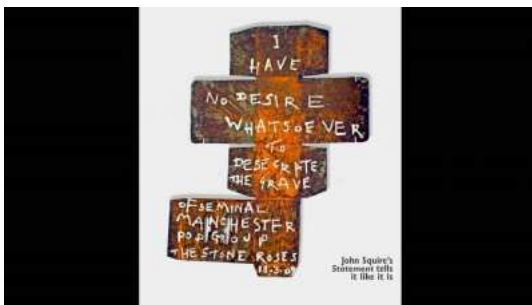
The Stone Roses - Made Of Stone (Blu-ray)

[MVD Entertainment Group](#) // Unrated // December 3, 2013 // Region Free

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Review by [Jesse Skeen](#) | posted February 6, 2014 | [E-mail the Author](#)



I often envy the UK, as they seem to reward quality music with high chart positions and popularity a lot more than over here in the US. Case in point- The Stone Roses are regarded in the UK as "legendary" but here they seem to have been just moderately successful. I'd been a fan of other Manchester-based bands such as New Order since the mid-80s, but it wasn't until the early 1990s that I had heard of The Stone Roses (after one radio station in Sacramento was finally brave enough to half-heartedly pick up the "modern rock" format) and then mostly just via the singles "I Wanna Be Adored" (which always sounded to me like "I Wanna Be Your Dog") and "Made of Stone." Like several other bands of the era, they had a rather dark sound with psychedelic influence. Lead singer Ian Brown's vocals usually sounded whispered to me, which was what made their sound stand out.



"Made of Stone" is a document on the Stone Roses' "live resurrection", after the members (Ian Brown, John Squire, Gary "Mani" Mounfield and Alan "Reini" Wren) decided to re-form for a concert tour after being apart for a few years. Director Shane Meadows had already been a long-time fan and was eager to document their reunion. The main segments consist of the band's press conference announcing their getting back together and upcoming tour, rehearsing, a surprise free show at Parr Hall in Warrington, and then footage of their concerts in Barcelona, Lyon and Amsterdam (where drummer Reini abruptly left before any encore could be played) before finally playing their three big comeback shows at Manchester's Heaton Park. In between these moments, archival film and video footage dating from the 80s through the early 90s is shown, of the band playing early gigs, recording, and some interviews. Unfortunately, all of this originally 4x3 footage is stretched out to 16x9, making everyone look short and fat. A number of magazine articles flash across the screen as well, which can be paused and read.

Most music documentaries fall into either having a good amount of performance footage or concentrating more on backstage footage and talking, and "Made of Stone" fits the latter. Only three complete songs are performed over the 100-minute running time: "Waterfall" during the rehearsal section with some good use of split-screen, "Adored" from the free Parr Hall show, and a powerful 15-minute performance of "Fools Gold" at Heaton Park. A number of other songs are excerpted, but ultimately there's more talk than music here. A good amount of time is spent on the Roses' fans, such as the line-up for the surprise free show where many run to secure a spot (they had to show a Stone Roses record or CD cover to gain admission) and express their admiration of the band to the camera, and subsequently are seen inside singing along enthusiastically. Reini's exit in Amsterdam was a surprise, and Shane Meadows follows that by speaking to the camera unsure whether the tour will continue at this point. While little behind-the-scenes details of that incident are given, the shot of the massive Heaton Park crowd tells us that things were worked out in the end.



- CONTENT
- ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
- VIDEO
- ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
- AUDIO
- ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
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Picture:

The new footage appears to have been shot digitally, but I could not find any confirmation. The film-like picture is very clear and detailed, with much of it shot in black and white (looking a bit odd only from the lack of film grain) with color reserved mostly for the big reveal of the final show. Many still photos and magazine clippings are displayed which also look pristine. Unfortunately the archival film and video footage is stretched making that hard to watch.



Sound:

Both a 2-channel PCM and 5.1 channel Dolby Digital track are included. The 5.1 track keeps most of the music in the front left and right channels, with vocals and any voice-overs isolated in the center. Surrounds aren't used a lot except for crowd noise during the concert footage.



Extras:

A commentary track with director Shane Meadows speaking in the right channel and producer Mark Herbert on the left is included, which is mostly conversational as they comment on the band in general but also talk a bit about how "Made of Stone" came together as the final outcome was uncertain. Over the archival footage they remark that they considered using just that if they weren't able to get any new footage of the band. They make a point of much of this old footage being "never before seen", but don't explain why they chose to stretch it out to 16x9 rather than keeping it at 4x3 or at least cropping it so the proportions stayed correct.

There are a number of other extras, which have a "Play All" option in the disc menu but a couple are skipped over with that selected. At Parr Hall, Meadows is seen talking about his hopeful outcome for the documentary. A fun 20-second clip of footage shot by a fan's cell phone at the Heaton Park show has Ian Brown grab it and make faces at the camera before handing it back to the excited concert-goer. There are two additional complete song performances of "She Bangs the Drums" in Japan and "Shoot You Down" at the Parr Hall show, and a trailer for the documentary. Finally, there's a "false start" outtake from the rehearsal footage, where "I Wanna Be Adored" is played only to stop after a missed note. Very strangely, this is repeated about six times over, and examining the disc on my computer it seems this is another authoring glitch as the segment is only physically there once. The pop-up menu during playback is also a bit glitchy as it locks up when selecting audio tracks, but can still be easily closed and audio tracks can also be switched with the player's Audio button.



Final Thoughts:

Ultimately your enjoyment of "Made of Stone" will depend mostly on your appreciation and familiarity with The Stone Roses and their music. Those who are already fans will probably love most of it, but viewers with little more than a passing interest may be put off by the music taking a back seat to the other goings-on. I personally would have preferred many more full song performances than what we get here, with the rest of the final show in Manchester being a glaring omission.

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"Made of Stone" has also been released separately on [standard DVD](#).

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