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Why I Made *The Stone Roses: Made Of Stone*

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The Stone Roses: Made Of Stone came about because of the fans.

When I was young I fell in love with the band, because they were so unashamedly proud of their roots. They didn't care if people loved them or hated them - they were just really bold. They had an attitude to them--almost like a punk attitude, but with this excitingly music that spoke to my generation. Before making the documentary, I'd never seen them live.

I'd had a ticket to see them at Spike Island, but I gave that away one night whilst under the influence of acid. I basically missed the gig of my generation. Roll forward 20 years and I'd gone from this little unemployed kid with no education, no qualifications, to becoming a filmmaker - my career happened completely outside of The Stone Roses existing as a band. Then I got this phone call in October 2011 telling me that the band were getting back together and that they wanted me to make the film.

At the time I was making TV series, *This is England '88* and Ian called and said, "We're getting back together," Obviously this was exciting news, not just as a filmmaker, but as a fan. And then he said, "Can you keep a secret and film a bit of it?" Suddenly, all bets were off. All the projects - I was about to do a massive film - were put on hold because I had to do this, even just to see The Stone Roses live. In a lot of ways, the film was always a fan's film. A lot of music docs, especially ones on TV, tend to be people digging the dirt and lots of talking heads, and I really wanted to avoid that. I really concentrated on how excited people were that this band was getting back together. It never was and never could be anything other than this. The film took me in that direction.

In terms of why The Stone Roses matter 16 years later, they were taken out of their prime and people had to wait so long for them to come back. Plus a lot of the other music that came out at the time felt like it was part of a scene, but their album; if that came out now it'd still cause a massive stir. That's the sign of any great music, any great album. You then throw in the bravado and swagger with which The Stone Roses carried it all off: on their own terms, fighting lawsuits against record companies. They were complete one-offs and anyone like that is going to make a mark on a young kid.

You realize that as a foursome, that was when they were at their strongest. When Mani says 'We were one of the toughest gangs in town,' you realize they were untouchable. You see the bravado in some of those interviews that they gave - 'We're the best band in the world and we don't care who thinks otherwise.' - but then when you actually strip it back to that room, they were just like us.

Everyone has something that reminds them of the great time of being a teenager, when a band captured your imagination. I still fall in love with new bands all the time. But I think to me, because the Roses were just cut off in their prime, they never fulfilled. Not a lot of people saw them live. When I went to see them the first time - not with a camera - I saw how these four people coming together gives this kind of energy beyond the chemical elements that they were. You just go, "Oh my God, that's what we need!"

I'm not normally a documentary maker. Music is important in my films, but really, there was something about it being the Roses. I think that if it had been another band asking me, I would have said no. But because it was the Roses, it was a story that had to be told. You had people in the press saying that the band was just getting back together for the money, but you go to the rehearsals and you soon realize that they're just trying to make the music the best it can be. This was a chance for the band to come back and show the people what amazing musicians they are and I think to sort of right a wrong, because they were taken from us fans too early - and they never really got to hit their prime. And the influence they had on me and many others had to be shown.

I was there as a fan and I wanted to capture something as a fan, and I'm still a bigger fan than I was when I started, and so that's testament to how great The Stone Roses are. I hope that people watch the film and see it as a celebration of the band and a way to recapture our youth.