

Goatsden

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"Strange Powers - Stephin Merritt and the Magnetic Fields" DVD (director: Gail O'Hara)

Fascinating look at a fascinating personality

Having been recording for prominent indie labels for nearly 25 years now, Stephin Merritt has somehow fallen beneath my own radar. And that's a shame, as this documentary shows a conflicted by extremely talented artist who's capable of producing some world-class indie pop sounds without much regard for commercial potential. His primary project, The Magnetic Fields, has created an extensive back catalogue of post-punk, synth pop, and indie rock that has found favor with peers and a small but devoted fan base. That's not to mention his other projects like the 6ths, Future Bible Heroes, or the Gothic Archies.

In this feature-length documentary, director O'Hara was granted access to Merritt's personal life and includes many intimate moments, onstage and off. As well, his longtime musical partner Claudia Gonson is featured throughout, among other bandmates, outside musicians, and fans. It's more of a "behind the scenes" documentary, rather than a historical one, but that's just fine. Merritt may seem aloof and deadpan (even morose and disagreeable) at times, but it's his music that does the speaking, and Merritt's music is intelligent, emotive, and intensely personal, connecting with people around the world who may feel lost, heartbroken, or disaffected.

For proven fans, "Strange Powers" will be a revelation. To the unfamiliar, it's a great lesson and entertaining film about an artist on the fringes who deserves more recognition.

(MVD Visual)

[Official Merritt website \(House Of Tomorrow\)](#)

Posted by [Goatsden](#) at 11:43 AM



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