

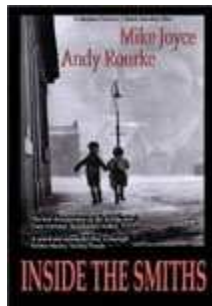
Features

Inside The Smiths

by [Vish Iyer](#)

The one idea that resonates throughout this film is that it is about The Smiths from the people who were actually there (and no, they aren't Marr or Morrissey). And the way it is shot goes hand-in-hand with this idea – *Inside The Smiths* is not a typical rock documentary of The Smiths. It doesn't go deep inside the lives of the band to expose spectacular facts about its members that the public never knew. It is merely a series of interviews – almost like story-telling – of the “other” two Smiths, bassist Andy Rourke and drummer Mike Joyce.

In a way, this DVD lacks a plot, a gripping force that would keep the interest of the viewer; there are no clips or band footage and absolutely no sound-bites of any Smiths song. The only two songs that do provide a soundtrack to the film are “Pounding” by the Doves and “Shine” by Monaco. Except for appearances by Rourke and Joyce, there are very few guest-stars featured here except for Joy Division/New Order bassist Peter Hook and Matt Osman of the London Suede who make ten-second cameo appearances.



So yes, except for the fact that this release is about one of the greatest bands in rock, it is pretty dry. The interviews (or the story-telling), even though they follow a chronological path of the band's history, seem for the most part scattered. But this absence of spice and the overly modest nature of this film are also its strengths. *Inside The Smiths* is just a couple of guys sharing their experiences of being in a band; it tells it like it is.

But Rourke and Joyce do not reveal anything earth-shattering that would change the viewer's perception of The Smiths. Although there is some conversation about Rourke's drug problem and Marr's abandoning of the band that might stir up some zing, the interviews are left ad-hoc about just generally being in The Smiths and are quite random. But there is an element of candidness that kind of holds this feature together in a weird way.

One would have expected much more detailed story of the unsung members of The Smiths about whom we know so little anyway. But since this is not meant to be a story “about” the two members as much as it is a story “from” the two members, it delivers what it promises; remember, this wasn't ever meant to be made into a film anyway. Don't expect a stellar show from a stellar rhythm section of a band that made history, just a heart-to-heart chat by a couple of middle-aged men, and you'll be in for some surprise. *Inside The Smiths* is not too bad for an accidental documentary.

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