

# Strangeways, There We Went

The Smiths' rhythm section goes on the record with *Inside the Smiths*.



difficult for most people outside the group to penetrate. But I think the incredibly strong bond between all four members made the relationship quite interesting. That's why it was tough talking about him. I wanted to be quite candid about our friendship, but not impersonal.



**You both seem genuine fans of the music.**

Look, regardless of fall-outs, the music was and is the most important

aspect of the Smiths. When listening to Smiths music today, the power and beauty of it all still holds me in awe.

**Is there some justice or fit end to your relations with your ex-bandmates now that Morrissey—albeit wrongfully—got accused of racism and Marr wound up nothing but a Modest Mouse?**

Journalists edit a piece in any way they fancy. They can make you the good guy or bad. That's why we wanted full editorial control over the DVD. Marr in Modest Mouse? They're a good group.

**Would it've been easier to have never Smith-ed at all?**

Oh, come on! If anybody thinks I'd swap the experience I've had being a Smith with anything else, then they are mad.

A.D. AMOROSI

YOU MIGHT THINK heaven knows bassist Andy Rourke and drummer Mike Joyce would be miserable now, what with the famed rhythm section of the Smiths splintered by the 1987 breakup of Johnny Marr and Morrissey, let alone the name-calling and songwriting royalty disputes. Yet it seems the duo has a bit of hand to go with the glove in *Inside the Smiths* (MVD), a documentary on the joke that isn't funny anymore. Joyce explains,

wonderful and indeed brilliant a time was had by all.

**What did a director's pitch need to have in order to entice you to talk?**

It had to be what it was really like to be in the Smiths. There is no other DVD that comes from the perspective of a group member. It's been talking heads who knew the group or had worked with the group. This is insight from the horse's mouth, so to speak. Plus me and Andy have known the directors for years so the element of trust was probably a deciding factor for us to spill our guts.

**There's talk about your initial meeting with Morrissey, and having him be a caged cat in the rehearsal studio, and a distance between you and the "delicate flower." Did he ever reveal himself beyond that to you?**

Morrissey's intense personality was quite

**Why was the notion of *Inside* considered?**

After various projects over the years where we felt there had been a degree of misrepresentation. We decided the time was right to set the record straight. Having full control over the film was of paramount importance. There seemed to be a lot of negativity surrounding the group from certain quarters, so we took the opportunity to make people aware just how

being low-key, well-informed, genuinely interested and relatively hip, and among those who gave of their time were ex-Fabs John Lennon, Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr. The Lennon session is of the greatest historical interest: aired in April 1975, it ultimately became his last full-length TV sitdown. Lennon used the airwaves to make known his then-pending battle with immigration officials who wanted to deport him. Of course he also answered Beatle questions for the billionth time, as do McCartney and Starr in their appearances. Snyder, who died last year, is off his game with Macca, who's joined by wife Linda in 1979. "Do sheep like being sheared?" Snyder asks when McCartney mentions that he keeps 300 of the critters on his farm. "It's not as bad as being killed," the Beatle shepherd wisely opines. Starr, perhaps not surprisingly, is down to earth and witty, though not exactly modest, declaring definitively in his 1981 chat that he was the world's best rock 'n' roll drummer. That may very well be true, but it usually sounds better coming from someone else.

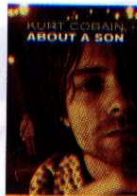
**Special features:** None. JEFF TAMARKIN

## KURT COBAIN: ABOUT A SON

(SHOUT! FACTORY, 135 MINUTES)

www.shoutfactory.com

Smells like musical martyrdom



If there's one truth AJ Schnack's unconventional rock-doc uncovers, it's that Kurt Cobain would've found a way to die with or

without Nirvana. Cut together from 25 hours of audio interviews journalist Michael Azerrad used for his book, *Come As You Are: The Story of Nirvana*, and supported by images of the gray skies and mossy shingles of the three Pacific Northwest 'burgs Cobain called home (Aberdeen, Olympia, Seattle), the Nirvana frontman comes across as manic-depressive, obsessive-compulsive, schizophrenic, nihilistic and hypochondriacal—with daddy issues, to boot. And for much of the film it's hard to generate much sympathy for someone who "always had the need to not belong" and was in such a perpetual state of self-loathing. But for all that brooding and bellyaching, *About A Son* finds some moments of clarity amid Cobain's own contradictions. With only one or two images of the man himself and zero Nirvana songs (the soundtrack features an excellent original score by Death Cab for Cutie's Ben Gibbard and producer



Jimmy Joe Roche and Dan Deacon

Steve Fisk, along with tracks from artists like Butthole Surfers, Iggy Pop and Mudhoney), Schnack's atypical approach turns out to be a particularly inspired creative choice. It's like a travel bus tour of the places and faces that made Cobain the depressive voice of Generation X—a posthumous title he's no longer able to defend himself from.

**Special features:** Filmmaker's commentary on selected scenes; video scouting comparisons; behind-the-scenes featurette. GREG WALTON

## DAN DEACON ULTIMATE REALITY

(CARPARK, 40 MINUTES)

www.carparkrecords.com

Pretty fuckin' far from reality



Dan Deacon is a whirlwind electro dervish, no doubt; jumping as he does during his gigs from the simple repetition of Philip Glass to the

nervous jerk of Devo through to the prog mellotron-iness of Messrs. Wakeman and Emerson. But from its energized bunny drumming in performance to its bonus clip for 2002's "The Crystal Cat," this *Reality* show is as much about how Deacon's pal—video artist Jimmy Joe Roche—ruggedly responds to Dan's sweaty, muscular, electronic composition. The answer—or teaming up process—becomes one of Schwarzeneggerian proportions; literally, as clips of Arnold's films come quickly and psychedelically in color-blasted, tie-dyed, kaleidoscopic pops that seem to render the screen into one big, oddly sexualized Rorschach test. From their use of the darkly arch *Total Recall*, the rigidly futuristic *Terminator 2* and all manner of kitschy muscle flexes cut in time to sputtering mashed-up sounds, it's as if Deacon and Roche have created their own brand of iron-pumping ambience.

**Special features:** Deacon "The Crystal Cat" music video, Deacon/Roche's "Kill 'Em All." A.D. AMOROSI