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THURSDAY, JULY 31, 2008

Susan Dynner - "Punk's Not Dead" DVD



Now, this one is world-class. Never before have I seen a historical documentary and history of punk rock that is as comprehensive, factual, and fascinating as this one. This years-in-the-making film is, quite possibly, the definitive document of punk's often-misinterpreted and sketchy past (and present).

Featuring interviews with personalities from nearly every notable and essential punk band, there's no skimping on the details and history. Take a look at just some of the participants here: Bad Religion, Black Flag, Ramones, Rancid, Social Distortion, Stiff Little Fingers, Sham 69, Damned, Green Day, MC5, Minor Threat, Subhumans, UK Subs, Sex Pistols, Exploited, Billy Idol, Dead Kennedys...and the list goes on. And beyond their personal insights, there are countless flyers, album covers, images, old movies, etc. to illustrate the 'hows', 'wheres', 'whos', and 'whys' of the 70's most influential and relevant musical and cultural phenomenon, and its influence on today's music and pop culture.

In Dynner's movie, the history is essential, but her insights go further than that. Punk rock's socio-political relevance is examined, as is its undeniable influence on fashion (Hot Topic? piercings? tattoos?). The film examines the evolution of the genre - from its' explosive 70's beginnings, to the mostly-forgotten 80's era, when punk quietly inspired some of today's biggest rock stars. And it even looks deeper into today's 'punk', with bands who purists may scoff at (Good Charlotte and Sum 41 are given time here to explain their roots and feelings), yet are included in the style nonetheless. In short, virtually nothing is left out - from arrests and social unrest to selling out.

There are so many great stories told here (from the legends themselves, both known and unknown), with trivia and anecdotes galore, lest you expect a dry and purely scholarly examination of the virtues and downfalls of the genre. It's exhaustive, it's authoritative, and it's a helluva lot of fun.

This is essential viewing for anyone with even a passing interest in the subversive music and lifestyle that has been co-opted by

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