



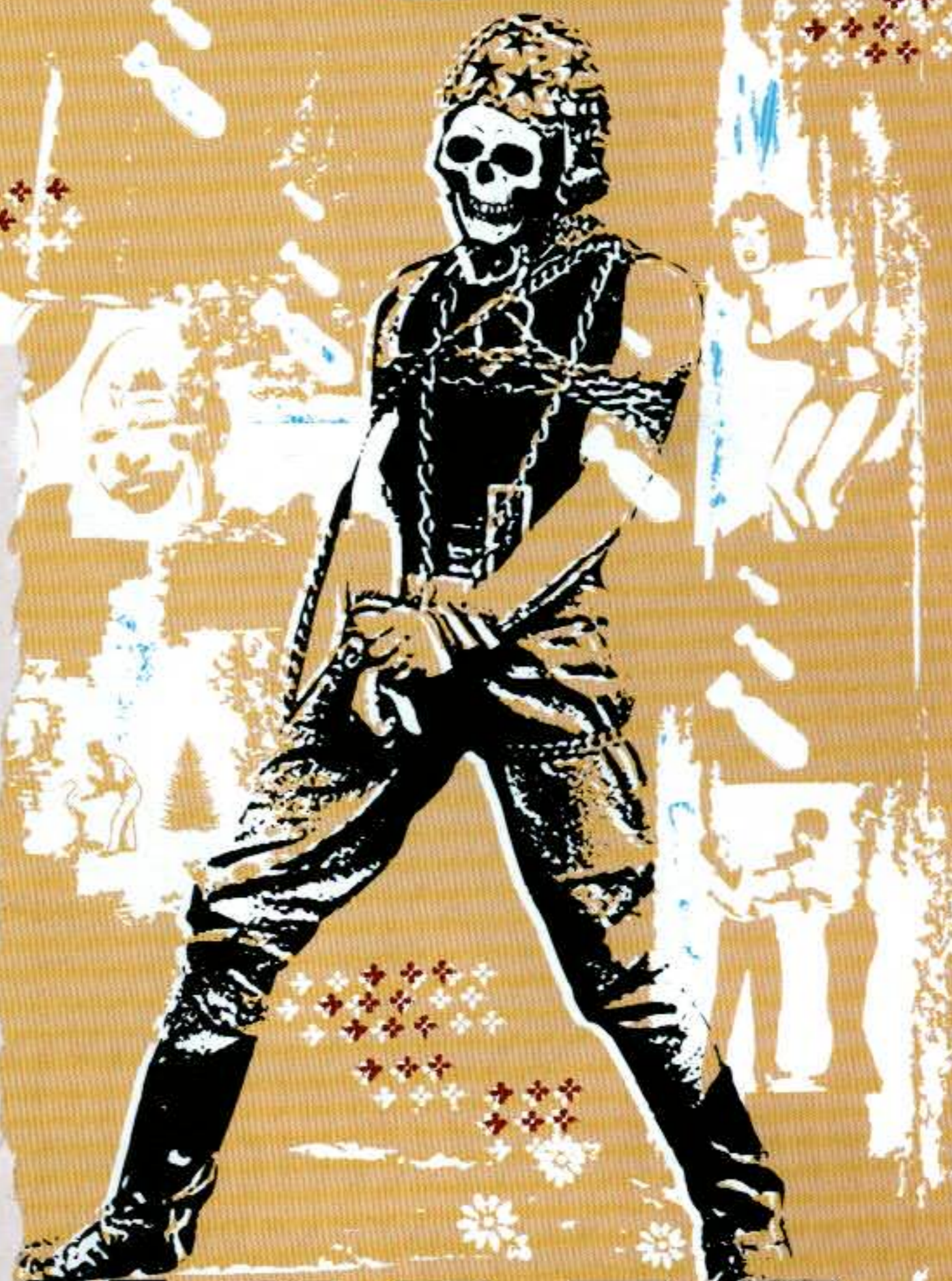
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Under Review – The Velvet Underground (MVD)

A primer for those unfamiliar with the 60s New York art

musical quartet that brought, not only decadent sex and smack and poetry to rock and roll, but drone, atonality and the avant-garde experiments of John Cage and LaMonte Young. Ultimately, this Andy Warhol-championed quartet proved as influential as any rock act, including The Beatles and Bob Dylan. Musical auto-didact Brian Eno wryly observed that not too many people may have purchased the albums, but everyone who did, promptly went out and started a band. Others, like legendary rock critic Lester Bangs and almost every wag appearing in this documentary, claim that VU “started modern music.” Judge for yourself but know, going in, that neither guiding light Andy Warhol nor John Cale or Lou Reed appear to give testimony. However, Warhol is dead and founding fathers Cale and Reed are insane, so that’s all to the good. Better to hear from the far more stable Moe Tucker (who carved out the side of her face?) and Doug Yule who, with their candid reflections and measured insights, allow us to penetrate the thick fog of legend obscuring both The Velvets and their considerable accomplishments. Eighty-five divine minutes in other words, with obscure footage, rare musical performances (never in toto), live and studio performances of Velvety nuggets like Sister Ray, Heroin and Sweet Jane (ditto for no toto), and all manner of dusty footage and arcane arcane.



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