

The Smiths *Under Review*

Sexy Intellectual

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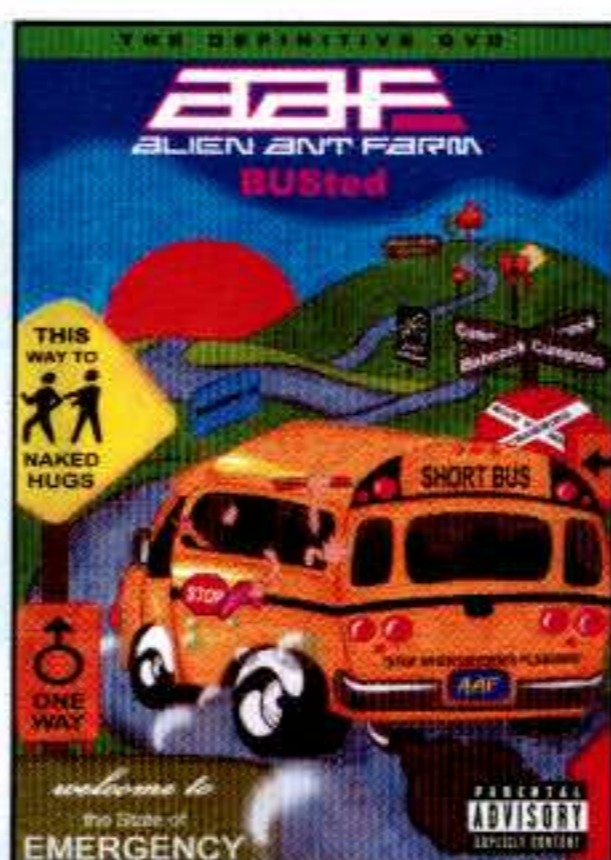


"Tonight, a band that has spoken in its songs for the much of the intelligent, unblinking youth of this country," is the opening quote of this documentary; a quip pulled from actual footage introducing the band's appearance on a British TV show. This didactic phrase captures the very essence of a band that was one of the most influential independent rock bands to come out of England in the eighties.

The Smiths Under Review is simple and leans towards a dry delivery in the presentation of its facts. Yet for a true Smiths fan, it is quite a comprehensive analysis of the formation of the band; a snapshot of its more influential members (Morrisey and guitarist Johnny Marr); and a critical examination of their unique sound and the elusive thing, the "it" factor that gave the band its timeless sound and bolstered their strong cult following many decades after their demise.

Though the no-frills camera work, editing, and overall feel of the documentary is low-budget, or intentionally stripped down to the bare bones, its spartan conveyance does not detract from its interesting and intelligent analysis. The wining point of this documentary is that it does not feel like an empty, hour long music video. Its weakness is the between-song splices of (often rambling) musical critics who seem as if they are being paid by the word for their opinions.

- Claudia Ward-de León



Alien Ant Farm *BUSTed*

Geffen

www.alienantfarm.com



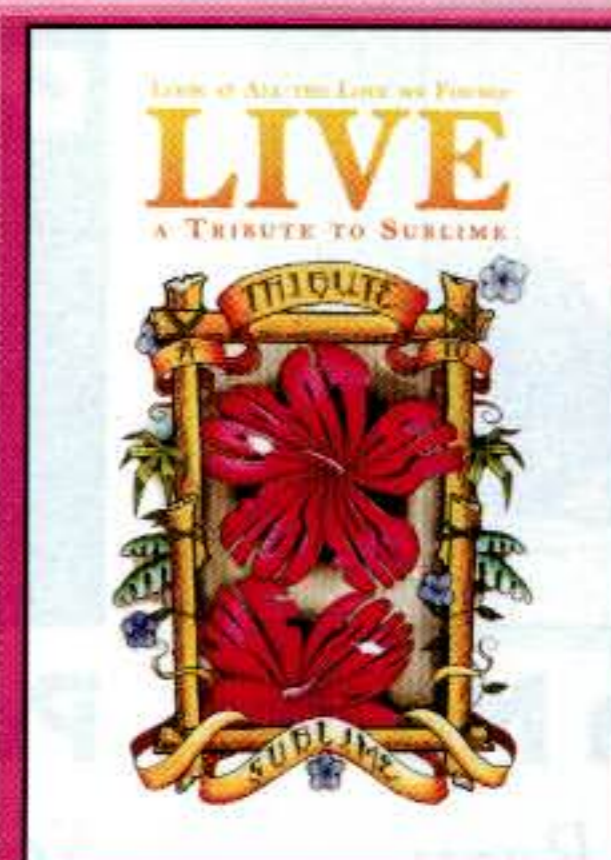
For a collection named in honor of Alien Ant Farm's very serious bus crash that killed their driver, this DVD has a lot of sack.

It also has 13 music videos, a 12-song live concert, and plenty of bonus features, but the many scrotal images in the documentary "Road to Wreckage" are hard to delete from the brain. AAF vocalist Dryden Mitchell is obviously tight with his crew, given how much he waggles it in their faces during tours for the band's three albums.

But junk aside, the DVD is certainly a must-have for any fans of the SoCal alt-metal quartet. Best known for their 2001 cover of Michael Jackson's "Smooth Criminal," Alien Ant Farm has packed *BUSTed* with every video they ever made, a full show in Germany, and the documentary, which shows them on the road and in the studio over the course of their career since 1996. There is also a Playlist feature that allows viewers/listeners to set song playback from the DVD in any order.

For the AAF newbie, the strongest part of the DVD is probably the music video collection, which includes some well-produced and semi-hilarious segments. The video for "Movies" has them performing as Ghostbusters and Oompaloompas, and for "These Days," they crash the red carpet at a BET awards show (In the alternate version, they also trespass on a Justin Timberlake concert and GBLT Pride parade). It's not worth a purchase if you're not into commercial alt-metal, but otherwise a strong, comprehensive package. No pun intended.

- Evie Nagy



A Tribute To Sublime

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The reason Sublime's music fares so well in translation is because it is so brilliantly simple in its structure yet replete with soul. Anyone who respects the tragically short-lived Sublime can tell you that their small catalog of songs contains more soul than most of the music that's come out in the last decade.

This double disc set is a tribute to Sublime by acts ranging from Blackalicious to Fishbone to the Ziggens. What it does, it does well. It takes a diverse range of acts and mishmashes live concert footage of the relatively small-scale show with snippets of musicians participating in the tribute concert, plus their ruminations and reflections about the Long Beach, CA band.

The fact that Los Lobos can carry a Sublime tune in one set and Blackalicious can follow-up with an energized version of "Alphabet Aerobics" is tribute to the fact that Sublime's music spanned so many genres of music, doing so in a unique and uncompromised fashion. From reggae to hip-hop to punk to ska, they bordered on so much. This concert does a good job of revealing the unity, genius, and in general the appeal behind their music.

A final thing to note about this DVD—which is a must for any Sublime fan—is that not only can you kick back with a 40 and watch the thing as a whole, but a click of the remote allows you to only watch the concert—a nice feature for those with a short attention span.

- Claudia Ward-de León