

REVIEWS

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ZINES



02.04.08

Dinosaur Jr

LIVE IN THE MIDDLE EAST- (IMAGE ENTERTAINMENT)- Of all of the 80's bands who made comebacks in these last few years (Mission of Burma, Pixies, etc. etc) this is the one I was the most excited about. I have always loved the first 3 Dino Jr. records (with the original lineup) but as much as I loved the records the two live gigs I caught by them back in 1987 (Trenton, NJ and New Brunswick, NJ) were both disasters. Both sets got cut short and at both places (especially New Brunswick) the sound was a complete mud bog. When Dino Jr. played here last year at the Crystal Ballroom the sound was great and the band was smokin'. This concert dvd, filmed mostly at Boston's Middle East, shows the band in fine form. We all know that vocalist/guitarist J. Mascis is an amazing guitar player and bassist Lou Barlow pounds the strings on his instrument but the biggest surprise of the reunion is drummer Murph. I don't even remember him being that good of a drummer but during these gigs he is a total machine. We're treated to early classics like "Kracked", "Forget the Swan" (my favorite song off their debut), "The Lung", "Freak Scene", "Little Fury Things" and plenty of other plus 2 covers (The Cure's "Just Like Heaven" and old Boston h/c band Last Rites "Chunks"). Essential. www.image-entertainment.com



02.04.08

Nick Drake

UNDER REVIEW- (MVD)- Mostly enjoyable 90 minute dvd on the late Mr. Nick Drake, a musician who has gotten way more acclaim since his death than he ever received while he was alive (Drake died in 1974 at age 26). The thing is there was only ever one interview with him (and that interviewer, Jerry Gilbert, speaks on here), no live footage or videos so all we are left with are his 3 records (4 if you count the outtakes record) and a whole bunch of mystery. We are treated to interviews with a few Fairport Convention guys (Ashley Hutchings and Dave Mattacks) , folkie Ralph McTell, both Nick biographers (Trevor Dann and Patrick Humphries), Incredible String band-er Robin Williamson and a few others lesser known types. It is interesting to hear from a few people who actually knew Drake speak about him but again, I wish they would (could) have found some old footage of him playing live (which he rarely ever did) or being interviewed. Still, this UNDER REVIEW is definitely worthy of your time. www.mvdvisual.com



02.04.08

Bob Mould

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS- (MVD)- Wow, good to see Bob Mould continue to reinvent himself. My personal favorite part of his catalog is the Husker Du stuff, maybe because that is when I first started listening to his songs. Never cared much for Sugar when they were around (I was probably still angry at the Huskers breakup) but got into their stuff later. However, for folks who have liked everything Bob Mould has done and always wanted a smattering of each well then your wait is over. This gig, filmed at Washington, DC's legendary 9:30 Club (a place I still have yet to set foot in) in late 2005 shows a recharged Mould with a terrific band Fugazi's Brendan Canty on drums, Jason Narducy on bass and Richard Morel on keys) charging through 23 songs from his back catalog. Starting off with three songs from Sugar's Copper Blue and right into a few from the solid Body of Song . Elsewhere Moulds reaches far back and beyond in recreating a classic from Workbook ("See a Little Light") and several from his legendary first band, Husker Du ("Celebrated Summer", "I Apologize", etc.). At this point in his career Mould (in the best shape of his life) doesn't seem content to play his acoustic guitar in coffeehouses. On the contrary, the way he jumps around during this set you wonder when he is going to break out the Flying V. www.mvdvisual.com



01.27.08

Donovan

THE DONOVAN CONCERT: LIVE IN LA- (MVD)- Glad to see Mr. Donovan is still out there making people smile.. Apparently at some point he became good friends



with David Lynch as this gig is a benefit for the David Lynch Foundation for Consciousness-Based Education and World Peace (a program which funds Transcendental Meditation for at-risk youth.....very cool if you ask me!). Anywho, this gig was from 1/21/07 at the Kodak Theatre in L.A. and it's just Donovan and his acoustic guitar but he still sounds inspired and lively. All of the hits are played ("Sunshine Superman:", "Mellow Yellow", "Hurdy Gurdy Man", etc.) and we even see surprise appearance from Beach Boy Mike Love and Donovan's daughter, Astrella Celeste. I wouldn't call this essential viewing or anything but it's well done and a pleasant evening out (lots of smiles from the crowd and hand clapping during favorite songs) and if you're a Donovan fanatic then you don't wanna miss it. www.mvdvisual.com



01.27.08

Naked Raygun

WHAT POOR GODS WE DO MAKE: THE STORY AND MUSIC BEHIND NAKED RAYGUN- (RIOT FEST)- Ah.....my beloved Naked Raygun. Always a pleasure to see anything on these guys but when I heard they had reformed and were playing some west coast gigs, well, that was icing on the cake. This is a terrific documentary which coincided with their headlining the Riot Fest in Chicago last year. It has lots of great live footage and plenty of interviews. A few of those who wax nostalgic about Raygun include their old buddies Steve Albini, John Kezdy (The Effigies), Jake Burns (Stiff Little Fingers), as well as some Chicago area writers like Greg Kot and Jim Derogatis. It's interesting to find out in interviews just how many lineups the band went through and how many different types of sounds the band went through (I guess real early on, when vocalist Jeff Pezzati's brother Mark who started the band was the vocalist , they were quite experimental). At one point Albini tells that real early on Jeff Pezzati had a pompadour before his brother told him to get a haircut. The four (final lineup) members of N.R. all tell some great band stories (Eric Spicer, who not only is the tannest human being on earth, is funny as all hell) and I only wish we would have heard from some of the ex members of N.R., namely longtime guitarist John Haggerty, Marko Pezzati, etc. The dvd has plenty of extras and it also comes with a cd that includes 22 live songs from late 2006 and at \$20 this is a steal. Even if you have a passing interest in N.R. or punk rock (or the city of Chicago) then this is absolutely essential. www.nakedraygun.org



01.27.08

Ramones

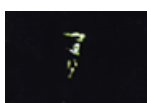
IT'S ALIVE: 1974-2006- (RHINO)- Both END OF THE CENTURY:THE STORY OF THE RAMONES and RAW (both released in the last few years) are great (especially the former) but if you're looking for the holy motherlode of live material then look no further as this hot-pink cased, 2-dvd set (119 songs!) is it. It's chronological and from some of the early b/w footage from CBGB'S , Max's Kansas City and My Father's Place show the band slowly getting their look/sound down (ok, so it was there from the beginning but the first footage from Sept of 1974 the band was in its early stages but by the next batch of footage, from April 1976, they were there). In addition to the classic NYC haunts there's several appearances on the UK tv show The Old Grey Whistle Test (and a few on Top of the Pops too) plus Don Kirshner's Rock Concert (remember that show ??? I doDon is shown on here announcing the band in a hot pink shirt unbuttoned part of the way down with gold chains n' chest hair) and a ton of songs each from The Rainbow in London (where the IT'S ALIVE cd came from), the US Festival (in front of what looks like hundreds of thousands) , the outdoor San Francisco Civic Center (on a beautiful day) , on the tv show Sha Na Na (Bowser introduces them...heck, he looks like he could have been a Ramone!) and the dvd-ending concert from 1996 in Buenos Aires, Argentina in front of what looks like a million people. No extras or special features but you don't need them. Flippin' great! www.rhino.com



01.21.08

Cro-Mags

THE FINAL QUARREL:LIVE AT CBGB 2001- (MVD)- These guys seemed to be all the rage back in the late 80's in the northeast (this is when their debut record AGE OF QUARREL, came out and I was still living in NJ) but I never got into their brand of crunch-metal-punk. At these time bands like these guys, Agnostic Front (who had gone more metal than punk), The Crumbsuckers, Murphy's Law and the like seemed to be going for the hardest sound they could find (or at least the grimaces on their faces made it look like that). As the title implies, this is the Cro Mags last gig, at their haven, CBGB's. Leader/bassist Harley Davidson is the focal point here (and it featured prominently in the extras including footage with him and his son and Harley giving a tour of CBGB's). Definitely not my favorite band out there but for fans this will quench that thirst for them that I know you have. BONUS MATERIAL: A slide show, a full set from Harley's new band, Harley's War, Harley giving a tour of CBGB and footage of Harley and his son jamming. www.mvdb2b.com



01.21.08

Pet Shop Boys

CUBISM IN CONCERT 11-14-06 MEXICO CITY- (RHINO)- Had you told me back



in my punk rock days that I'd become a Pet Shop Boys fan I would have laughed at your face. Well, when I interviewed St. Etienne in the mid-late 90's Bob Stanley told me he was a big PSB's fan (he told me his biggest influences were the PSB's and the Beach Boys) so I figured if it's good enough for Bob Stanley (Mr. Caff Records, to you) then it's good enough for me. My wife and I even caught them live in San Francisco in the late 90's and they put on a great show. This show was on the tour for 2007's FUNDAMENTAL but the songs during this concert spanned their career and you get to hear old classics like "West End Girls", "Opportunities (let's make lots of money)" and "It's a Sin" to more recent tunes like "Psychological", "I'm with Stupid" and "Minimal." The whole thing is a complete spectacle with costume changes, choreographed dance moves and plenty of computer generated fun as only PSB can do. I feel this band has never gotten their fair shake but hey, if you like excess and want to be entertained, CUBISM IN CONCERT will entertain you. BONUS MATERIAL: photo gallery, 8-minute behind the scenes filmed in Mexico and audio commentary from the band.
www.wmg.com



01.21.08

Johnny Thunders

WHO'S BEEN TALKING: IN CONCERT- (MVD)- I gotta admit I was never a big New York Dolls fan and I liked the Heartbreakers even less. Johnny Thunders, guitarist for both bands and while a fine guitarist, I think the guy was overrated. Had a chance to see him once in Philly at Revival in about 1987 and blew it off (did he even show up?) . This is a concert from Japan probably right before his death and on stage with him he had a dancing girl/backup singer plus a honking sax player. While he does play "Chinese Rocks" (his signature tune) he does play "In Cold Blood", "Personality Crisis", "Gloria", plus his usual surf tunes; "Pipeline" and "Wipeout." After watching him play I now believe he probably wasn't overrated, in fact, he may have been a bit underrated. The guy was a fairly amazing guitar player (in the scarf wearin'/face makin'/struttin' across the stage type styles). It's a shame that he's known more these days as a punchline to a heroin joke than he is a terrific guitar player but we all make our own beds. WHO'S BEEN TALKING is definitely worth checking out. www.mvdb2b.com



09.03.07

The Jesus Lizard

LIVE- (MVD)- While I must admit that I was always partial to Scratch Acid (vocalist David Yow's band prior to Jesus Lizard) that is not to say that I didn't dig the Lizard. I did indeed dig their stuff and I remember seeing them at least once probably some dive in Philly (most likely The Khyber). I did like seeing J.L. live 'cos first off you had bassist David Wm. Sims staring you down from the stage (just like he used to do in Scratch Acid) and David Yow just being a complete freak. The gig on this dvd was from October of 1994 from a club in Boston, Venus de Milo (well, the press release says Boston but from the stage Yow says "Hello Cambridge"ok, story time: one time in the late 80's I was hanging out with some friends in Somerville, MA and I made the genius comment of "It's great to be here in Boston" on when a friend of a friend, not a very friendly one, looks at me with a dead stare and says, in that Bah'stan accent, "You're not in Boston, you're in Somerville!"). Anywho, on this dvd the camera shots are all good as is the sound and at one point Yow gets the ok from a crowd and dives right in. The band tackles "Gladiator", "Mouthbreather", "Horse", "Mailman" and plenty of others. Plus as a bonus there is 5 additional tracks recorded in NYC at CBGB's in the Summer of 1992 (including "My Own Urine", "Monkey Trick", "Wheelchair Epidemic", etc.).
www.mvdvisual.com



09.03.07

Lene Lovich

LIVE FROM NEW YORK AT STUDIO 54- (MVD)- While I own a handful of Lene Lovich records I must say that I hardly ever listen to them (though I was happy as a pig in poop when I got the "New Toy" 12" back in the early 80's). This show, from December 4th, 1981, captures Lovich and her band (which includes, yep, that is him, Thomas Dolby on synth) in the Big Apple.....btu strangely enough, it wasn't from the Mudd Club or Danceteria or even CBGB's but from the legendary hedonistic disco that was Studio 54 (where was Warhol? Bianca? Cher?). This is classic in new wave excess from both the band and the fans. I remember the early 80's very well and yes, I too was a new wave loser. Lene comes out dressed to the nines (as my pal Tony used to say) looking like part UK hipster (thought she was actually born in the USA, in Detroit) and part mental patient (with that hair!) and out comes that famous hiccup of a voice. With Dolby looking every bit the scientist that he is (or was) and the other band members looking oh so new wave they tackle "Details", "Lucky Number", "Rocky Road", and, of course, "New Toy." I won't say that this dvd enticed me into tossing a Lene record on the turntable but I must say, I did enjoy watching every minute of it. www.mvdvisual.com



09.03.07

The Queers

ARE HERE- (MVD)- Hard to believe that The Queers have been around for 25 years and to commemorate it Joe and Co. have released this dvd. If you have never



heard this New Hampshire institution take two parts Ramones and add some Screeching Weasel and Mr. T Experience and yes, you have what we call, pop punk. All the hits are played: " I Spent the Rent", "Fagtown", "Tamara is a Punk", "Brush Your Teeth", " I Only Drink Bud", and , of course, the smash single, "Drop the Attitude Fucker." It has live clips from 1993 up to 2005 as well as videos and some unreleased animated video . I only have one problem: it didn't play in my dvd player and the odd thing is that this is the 2nd copy they have sent me. The first one was scratched and skipped all the way through. The only thing I can do is bring it over a friends house and see if it plays over there. I really do wanna see it.www.mvdvisual.com