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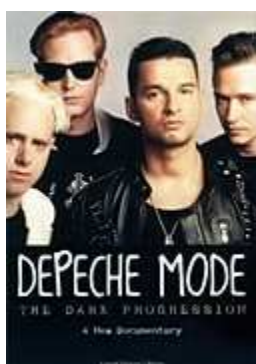
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**Nic Brown's Blood Curse**



**Depeche Mode - The Dark Progression (2009) - By Sharon Martin**

Posted on Thursday, July 02 @ Mountain Daylight Time by Duane



The Dark Progression is a new, unauthorized documentary of one of the best known and well regarded electronic bands to spring forth from the 80's music scene, Depeche

Mode. The documentary encompasses the time from the start of their career in 1980, through the release of their Songs of Faith and Devotion album and the resulting Devotional Tour (1993/1994) that followed. It does mention their newer albums briefly, but doesn't really discuss them in any detail, which is a shame because Depeche Mode, like all great bands, continues to evolve and grow with each new album.

The group was formed in Basildon, Essex, England, by Martin Gore, Andrew Fletcher and Vince Clark. Dave Gahan also joined the band that same year. After the release of their album "Speak and Spell", Clark left the band to form Yazoo, with Alison Moyet and then later went on to form yet another well known band, Erasure, with Andy Bell. Alan Wilder replaced Vince Clark in early 1982, but then left the band in 1995 after only a three year run. The band continues on today as a three man operation, with Gore and Fletcher handling the music while Gahan has only gotten better and better at belting out the melodic, soulful lyrics.

I became a fan of Depeche Mode after my sister introduced me to their music, but I've never taken my fandom to the point where I had gone out of my way to watch any



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documentaries or to read any biographies about the band or its members, so I was looking forward to learning a little something about them all. I wasn't really sure what to expect when I sat down to watch it though, because usually, unauthorized biographies contain mostly recycled footage and old interviews and not a whole lot more than that. The Dark Progression is different. It combines videos (music videos and live clips) and footage with new interviews with not only producers, but with other musicians, like Thomas Dolby and Gary Newman, and even critics (though I wish it had more interviews with the band members). It also discusses the different influences and events that helped to bring about the creation and development of Depeche Mode's unique sound, and goes through the different albums (up to Songs of Faith and Devotion), documenting how their sound has changed over the years.

The documentary does go out of its way to avoid personal issues, which I guess in some ways is understandable, but in order to have a full accounting of the experiences that shaped who these guys were and how it affected their music, these aspects of their lives should have been covered in a bit more detail. Dave Gahan's drug addiction is mentioned briefly - but only to explain how it influenced his style. In my opinion, a more personal look at the band members would have added immeasurably to the story. I think leaving that part of it out only gives you a part of the story, and doesn't really paint a complete picture of what shaped them as individuals and how they brought those experiences into their music and performances. Then again, I can see how reluctant they might be to discuss such things, and getting that sort of information second hand can often lead to inaccuracies that aren't fair to the people being discussed. I guess I would have liked it better if first hand accounts had been included, while at the same time I'm relieved that sensationalistic and potentially inaccurate second hand accounts weren't. I believe in the end, that was a good call on the part of the makers of this documentary.

Both the sound and visual quality of this DVD are very good. There are a couple of extras included on the disc, including some extended interviews and contributor biographies.

All in all this was a very well done documentary and I believe it's a must have for fans of the group who really want to know about the evolution of a band that has managed to stay together for almost three decades, making music that still manages to sell out their live shows to this

very day. Even if you're not a fan of their music, the documentary still has an interesting story to tell and it's definitely worth checking out.

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