

The DVD-Laser Disc Newsletter

Grunge survivors

The full birth of grunge shifts into the story of the one grunge band that survived its era intact on the Sexy International release, **Pearl Jam Under Review** (UPC#823564522494, \$20). Pearl Jam was sort of the Rolling Stones to Nirvana's Beatles. Running 89 minutes, the 2009 program tells a reasonably complete story of the band and its members. The interviewees are primarily rock journalists and music engineers, and the band is only seen from afar. The analysis of the music is not as deep as it is on some **Under Review** programs, but as an introduction it is fairly thorough and sufficiently detailed. There are a few complete song clips, and at least partial clips of most of the group's major hits. The band's challenge to the concert ticket conglomerates is also addressed, although it is acknowledged that ultimately, it was quixotic battle. Except for that interlude and a minor wrong turn or two over the course of the band's musical explorations, the documentary depicts a successful group that managed to avoid the dramas and tragedies that seem to upend the majority of superstar rock bands over an even moderate length of time. Sometimes, that is a sign of mediocrity, but the group turns out to have been an exception to that rule as well.

The full screen picture varies in quality from clip to clip but is generally in decent condition. The stereo sound has an adequate dimensionality, and there is no captioning. Also featured is a good 18-minute audio-only interview with the actual band members, Eddie Vedder and Matt Cameron, along with text profiles of the contributors to the documentary.