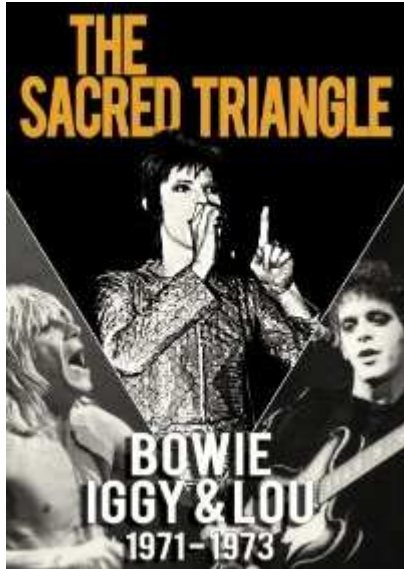


- Crawdaddy! - <http://www.crawdaddy.com> -**Film Review: *The Sacred Triangle: Bowie Iggy & Lou 1971 – 1973***By [j. poet](#) on November 25, 2010 @ 9:29 am in [Film Review, What Goes On](#) | [1 Comment](#)***The Sacred Triangle: Bowie Iggy & Lou 1971 – 1973***

Dir. Alec Lindsell

(Sexy Intellectual/Chrome Dreams, 2010)

This British documentary by director Alec Lindsell (*Revolution in the Head: Rage Against the Machine and the Art of Protest*) examines the genesis of three albums that transformed rock music in the early '70s and laid the foundation for much of what was to follow. Lou Reed's *Transformer*, Iggy and the Stooges' *Raw Power*, and David Bowie's *Ziggy Stardust* all staked out unique creative ground and came about due to the friendships that were forged between Bowie, Reed, and Pop at Max's Kansas City in the late '60s and 1970.

The story is told from the viewpoint of people who were on the scene at the time, and while interesting, their pontificating is often tiresome. The one exception is Bowie's ex-wife and business partner, Angie Bowie. She holds nothing back and fills the screen with her larger-than-life persona. It seems safe to say that she had as much input into creating the image of Bowie as Bowie did himself.

The tale unfolds more or less chronologically, using archival material and photos to illustrate the narratives of the interviewees. It traces the evolution of Bowie—who was driven to become a star—from hippie folk rocker to Ziggy Stardust, a makeover that was inspired in large part by the gritty songwriting of Reed, the multi-media excess of Warhol's *Exploding Plastic Inevitable*, and the over-the-top stage antics and aggressive music of Iggy and the Stooges. To Americans, Bowie appeared on the charts fully formed and freaky, but as Lindsell shows, his adaptation of the Ziggy identity was the end of a long period of musical and artistic evolution. Lee Black Childers, who helped run Bowie's Mainman management company, says that Bowie's genius was an ability to absorb and adopt the styles and music of other artists to his own ends. He says Bowie often admitted as much and told him his genius was knowing what to steal and what to leave alone. Unlike many artists, Bowie repaid his debts generously. With the help of Mick Ronson, he produced *Transformer* (Reed's commercial breakthrough), facilitated the recording of *Raw Power*, and later was responsible for Pop's personal and commercial rehabilitation with *The Idiot* and *Lust For Life*.

The film would have benefited from some input from Reed, Pop, or Bowie about the events in question, but the clips on view here are generic, with the artists speaking generally about their careers long after the time period in question. (The Reed clip is from 1986, the Pop clip from 1988, and the Bowie clips from 2001 and 2007.) The only major gaff is a clip of Ronson, looking frail but still beautiful, speaking about his work with Bowie. The onscreen credit for the clip says it's from 2001, but Ronson died of liver cancer in 1993.

The verdict? An interesting retelling of a seminal period in music and three of the men who rescued rock from the soft singer-songwriter sounds of the Eagles and James Taylor and helped lay the foundations for glam/glitter (Bowie) and punk (Iggy), genres that brought a little danger and rebellion back into pop. While much of the material here will be familiar to obsessive fans, it's still fun to watch the vintage clips of the Velvet Underground, Reed, Warhol, Iggy, Bowie, and assorted fans and hanger-ons. A little more music and some judicious editing of the often-lengthy interviews (the film clocks in at 107 minutes) would make this outing a bit more exciting and less academic. Ultimately, those unfamiliar with the ch-ch-changes of the music biz in the early '70s will probably find this documentary more interesting than the aging rock critics who witnessed and commented on it firsthand.

Watch: Trailer for [The Sacred Triangle: Bowie Iggy & Lou 1971 – 1973](#) [at youtube.com]

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