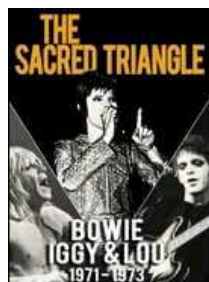




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Case Number 20051: Small Claims Court



The Sacred Triangle: Bowie, Iggy And Lou (1971-1973)

MVD Visual // 2010 // 107 Minutes // Not Rated
Reviewed by Judge Adam Arseneau // November 6th, 2010

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1



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Scales of Justice

Judgment: 73

Perp Profile

Studio: [MVD Visual](#)

Video Formats:

- Full Frame
- Audio Formats:
- Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo (English)

Subtitles:

- None

Running Time: 107 Minutes

Release Year: 2010

MPAA Rating: Not Rated

Genres:

- [Concerts and Musicals](#)
- [Documentary](#)
- [Performance](#)

Distinguishing Marks

- Featurette
- Biographies

Accomplices

- [Iggy Pop](#)
- [David Bowie](#)
- [Lou Reed](#)

All Rise...

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The Charge

Bowie, Iggy, and Lou.

The Case

In 1971, David Bowie was considered by many to be a one-hit wonder, his otherworldly single "Space Oddity" his only notable contribution. Desperate for inspiration, Bowie looked to shed his folksy image and become a superstar. Meanwhile, Lou Reed was stinging from a disastrous solo record, his glory days in the Velvet Underground being quickly forgotten by a fickle musical audience. Iggy Pop, on the other hand, was drug-addled and band-less, The Stooges having broken up the year before due in part to Iggy's constant drug use. What do all three men have in common? They met at Max's Kansas City in New York City and began an artistic meeting of the minds that would change all three of their fortunes forever.

The Sacred Triangle: Bowie, Iggy & Lou 1971-1973 chronicles the lead up and collaborations between these three visionary men of music, focusing primarily on the years 1971 to 1973. A low-key documentary assembled from the usual mishmash of archival footage, still photographs, narration, and interviews from friends and colleagues, this is a solid documentary for music lovers—lots of details and observations from people who witnessed the events first-hand, like David Bowie's ex-wife Angela Bowie, Andy Warhol's Factory assistant Billy Name, MainMan Management vice president Lee Black Childers, New York scenester Jayne (nee Wayne) Country, and many others.

It is an interesting story of fortune, especially if you are new to the subject. Bowie, whose own career was stagnating, became attracted like a moth to a flame to Lou Reed and Andy Warhol and the whole grime of the New York City art scene in the late Sixties and early Seventies, a creative bastion of free-thinkers. For Lou Reed, his own musical fortunes were dwindling. His first solo album, in a word, sucked. Becoming quick friends, the two collaborated and inspired each other from the get-go; Bowie attracted to Reed's Velvet Underground mystique, Reed becoming intrigued by Bowie's increasing glam rock styling. Iggy Pop saunters in, a frenetic Midwestern tsunami, starts going out with Nico (much to ex-boyfriend Lou Reed's consternation), and blows the eardrums off anyone in range. It was less a musical collaboration than an artistic one; the three didn't sit down with guitars and jam, so much as inspire each other to great heights.

While all three artists benefited from their collaborations and crossovers, **The Sacred Triangle** is quick to point out, almost accusatorily, that Bowie reaped the greatest amount of success from the trio. The most unique aspect of this film is this decidedly caustic, often unflattering look at Bowie and his predatory talent for musical pilfering, going so far as to suggest that Reed and Iggy were artistically mugged. It is an interesting take on the subject, to say the least. It might be fairer to observe that Bowie simply did what Bowie did for the next forty years in his musical career: he watched very carefully what was going on all around him in music, culture, fashion, you name it, and he appropriated the best of it into his act. Lou Reed and The Velvet Underground possessed artistic depth and resonance, but lacked the charisma to make it

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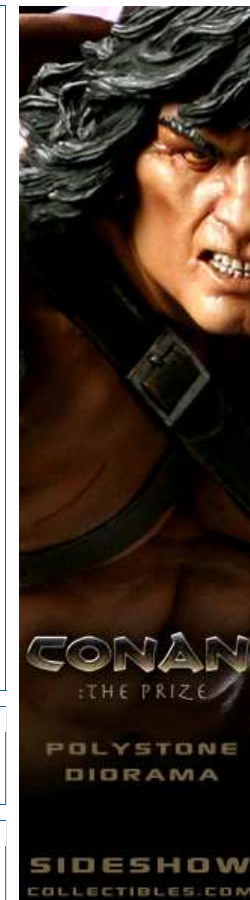
big. Iggy Pop was a whirlwind of blood and sweat and testosterone, but his drug dependencies and raw personality lacked poetic refinement. Bowie appropriated elements from both to created Ziggy Stardust, a manufactured rock persona, and it lead him to superstardom.

Opinions are divided in **The Sacred Triangle** as to whether Bowie was plagiarizing or polarizing. Either way, in doing so, his currency and influence became significant enough that he was able to lend his production and songwriting talents back to Iggy Pop (*Raw Power*) and Lou Reed ("Transformer"), which led them likewise to superstardom, so in the end, it all worked out quite well for the trio. Well, okay, it took a few more years for Iggy Pop. *Raw Power* is a seminal album of aggression and mad guitar, a proto-punk masterpiece, but it sold embarrassingly poorly in its day, and Bowie remixed it under duress by all accounts. The true collaborations between Iggy and Bowie, *The Idiot* and *Lust for Life*, were still quite a few years away, after Bowie had been to Berlin.

Presented in a simple full-frame and stereo track, **The Sacred Triangle** has the makings of a "made for British TV" documentary. Quality depends on the source material being displayed, but overall detail is soft, edges are blurred, and color palates are washed out. The stereo transfer does the job well enough, but lacks the low-end oomph—a major sin, considering how much amazing music gets played throughout this feature. We get choice tracks (and some very amusing early singles) from Iggy Pop, Lou Reed, and David Bowie alike. Don't buy this DVD for the technical presentation.

Extras are likewise slim. We get a 7-minute featurette, "The Nico Connection" focuses on the influence of another individual, the actress and model Nico and her connection to the iconic three, as well as biographies on the interviewees throughout the film.

If you are unfamiliar with this particular and unique period in musical history, **The Sacred Triangle: Bowie, Iggy & Lou 1971-1973** is worth the look. Despite a lackadaisical technical presentation, the film is assembled nicely and moves along at a solid pace. Still, there won't be many breakthrough moments for hardcore fans here.



The Verdict

Not guilty.

You, The Jury...



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