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***From Straight to Bizarre* Explores Frank Zappa's Freak Indies**

- By [Scott Thill](#)
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The late, great guitarist and composer Frank Zappa possessed a notable ear for both the straight and the bizarre. Which is why he founded twin indie record labels in the late '60s, intent on showcasing both types of music.

As recounted in Sexy Intellectual's new documentary *From Straight to Bizarre*, Zappa's [Straight Records](#) and [Bizarre Records](#) brought influential artists like Captain Beefheart, Alice Cooper, Lenny Bruce, Tim Buckley and his own Mothers of Invention to the world.

With rare footage, archival interviews and testimonials from artists and journalists interested in Los Angeles' oft-replicated [freak scene](#), the film peels back the decades to analyze the wide-ranging sonic bounty discovered and promoted by Zappa.


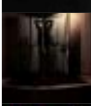





Like most independent musical ventures of the last millennium, Straight and Bizarre couldn't compete with the monolithic entertainment industry's greater firepower and stranger mazes. By the time the free-wheeling '70s gave way to the robotic '80s, Zappa and manager [Herb Cohen](#)'s Straight and Bizarre partnership had fractured acrimoniously, with the twin indies suffering collateral damage.

Screen the above trailer for *From Straight to Bizarre*, due Feb. 21 on DVD and demand, and let us know in the comments section below if you think Zappa's eccentric prescience, almost 20 years after his passing, still gets its due.

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Scott Thill covers pop, culture, tech, politics, econ, the environment and more for Wired, AlterNet, Filter, Huffington Post and others. You can sample his collected spiels at his site, [Morphizm](#).

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Martin Kasdan Jr

Yes, Persuasions are in it, including a bonus segment at end

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irisclara

I hope The Persuasions made it into this film. While not all of the Bizzare artists are to my taste Captain Beefheart is a truly amazing artist. I will check this movie out.

2 months ago

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