

VISIONS OF SOUND MUSIC ON DVD

HIGH TECH SOUL: THE CREATION OF TECHNO MUSIC (Directed by Gary Bredow)

High Tech Soul looks into the history of techno, its creators and birthplace: the post-industrial city of Detroit, MI. The first full-length documentary to dig into the genre, *High Tech Soul* focuses on pioneering musicians like Derrick May, Kevin Saunderson and Juan Atkins. This is an awesome DVD presenting the history of a music whose pioneers are alive and active. The production quality and flow of the story are top notch. One of the most striking aspects of this film is all the "smack talking" between the different people involved, which brings a very human aspect to an otherwise robotic genre. It's funny to hear people dissing Richie Hawtin or Eddie Fowlkes, and interesting to get a perspective on the people behind the turntables and synthesizers. Those who are into electronic music but aren't sure of its roots and early tracks will love this film for the soundtrack and history. (Plexifilm, www.plexifilm.com)
Marinko Jareb

MISSION OF BURMA *Not a Photograph*

Despite its brevity, *Not a Photograph* effectively delivers a number of the key scenes behind Mission of Burma's return and their renewed creative vigour following nearly two decades of silence. In this doc's tight 70 minutes, the focus rests primarily on the high spirits surrounding the Boston group's critically acclaimed reunion. It also explores the band's influence on an assortment of artists ranging from Sonic Youth to Moby. In charting Burma's course, the doc supplies an excellent variety of live footage. Early concerts, rehearsals and the group's first round of reunion shows in 2002 are all included. It also delves into some of the factors, including guitarist/vocalist Roger Miller's damaged hearing, which contributed to Burma's early demise in 1983 after only a handful of releases. Interviews with Miller, bassist/vocalist Clint Conley, drummer/vocalist Peter Prescott and a variety of other musicians, friends and fans provide wide views on the group's



Derrick May in
*High Tech Soul:
The Creation of
Techno Music*

PHOTO: COURTESY OF PLEXIFILM

past and present. The film doesn't dig deep into all the reasons leading to the group's reunion or the projects that band members were involved in following the group's initial split. Despite a few minor shortcomings, *Not A Photograph* provides an excellent overview to one of contemporary music's most compelling bands. (MVD, www.mvdvisual.com)
Rob Nay

WENDY O. WILLIAMS AND THE PLASMATICS *Ten Years of Revolutionary Rock 'N' Roll*

Three hours of experimental punk rockers blowing up cars, smashing television sets and fighting cops, what more could any Plasmatics fan ask for? While everyone claims to know the ins and outs of punk rock's most shocking experimental artists, few truly do. And, as *Ten Years* points out, even those who claim to know it all are out to lunch. A compre-

hensive look into the life of front-woman Wendy O. Williams, *Ten Years* is a detailed account of her professional career and a stunning look into some of her personal bouts, legal and otherwise. The plethora of interview footage, information and still shots is interesting, laying out virtually everything from the band's initial stages as an experimental punk art project through to Williams's final more metallic days. Overall, there are gaping holes. The addition of the Plasmatics in the title is misleading, as the band's lineup is barely noted outside of bare-bones interviews. Similarly, her demise is entirely ignored, the legend-stroking commentary grows annoying and the lack of full live shows and/or television appearances is a bummer. Still, with the amount of sensational information *Ten Years* provides, it is worthwhile punk learning. (MVD, www.mvdvisual.com)
Keith Carman