

I Ntake

Wendy O. Williams & the Plasmatics The DVD: 10 years of Revolutionary Rock & Roll

Punk

MVD Visual, mvdvisual.com

Review by Jenny Elig

Kerrang! Magazine recently released its obligatory 50 Greatest Punk Albums Ever list. While any punk rock fan could and would find a number of grievous errors on the list (Blink 182 on a list of the 50 greatest punk albums ever? Rrrrrreally?), a major mistake is the absence of Wendy O. Williams and the Plasmatics, the band with the charismatic lead singer who can stand throughout the ages as one of punk rock's founding mothers.

Wendy O. Williams, known during her career as "The Queen of Punk," "The High Priestess of Metal," "The Dominatrix of Decibels" and the "Queen of Shock Rock," was almost a little sighted, mythical creature to me, a woman who willfully appeared onstage with her boobs hanging out, wielding a chainsaw and breaking every and any barrier for women in punk rock.

Perhaps it was because of Williams' gate-crashing performances and innovative style (blowing stuff up as performance! Album covers with white Cadillacs tanked in swimming pools) that the Plasmatics often seem overlooked. As the two-hour long "rockumentary" featured on "Wendy O. Williams and the Plasmatics, the DVD," points out, other bands are still catching up to Williams and her bandmates. Seriously. It would be unheard of to see a half-naked woman on stage, hair coiffed in a mohawk, taking a chainsaw to a guitar.

The DVD, released by MVDvisual, pays homage to the band and helps fill in those huge gaps in the conscious of any punk rocker born post 1960. Chockfull of interviews with bandmates, producers and collaborators, the by-the-numbers-but-certainly-adequate rockumentary should serve to garner the band new fans; if you're an ardent feminist, old interviews with Williams will help her worm her way into your heart, guaranteed. Sadly, Williams died in 1998 of a self-inflicted gunshot wound, but this is a step toward making sure the jaw-dropping, risk-taking moves this consummate performer made will not be easily forgotten.

<http://www.intakeweekly.com/play/archives/12052006.html#wendyo>