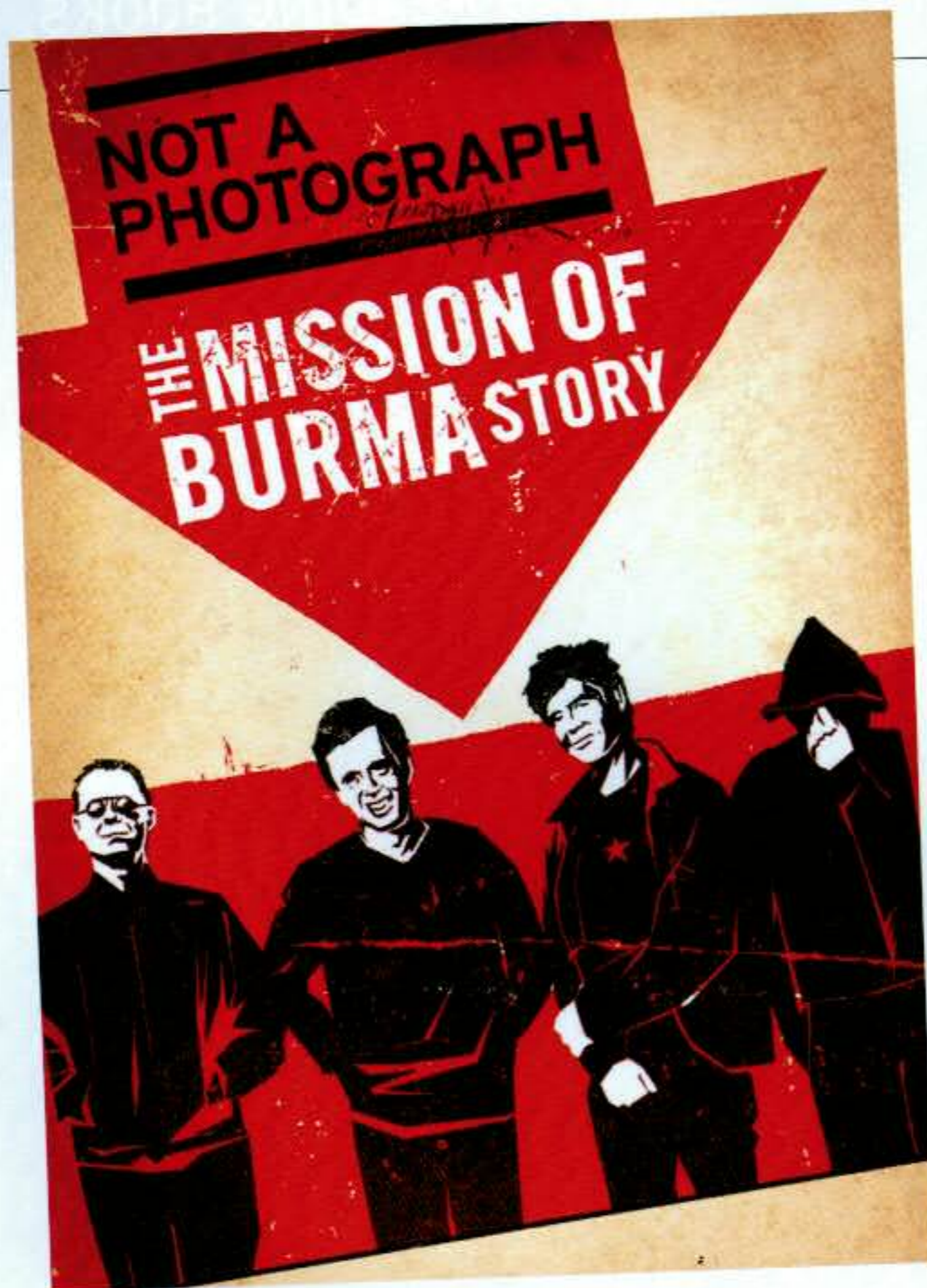


## SHORTCUTS

FILM &amp; DVDS



**NOT A PHOTOGRAPH**  
**The Mission Of Burma Story**  
 David Kleiler Jr. and Jeff Iwanicki  
 DVD, 70 minutes, \$19.95, MVD  
[www.notaphotograph.com](http://www.notaphotograph.com)

*Not a Photograph: The Mission of Burma Story* (Element Productions, 2006) frames its tale as the answer to the following question: "What happens when the most influential band you never heard reunites after 19 years?" The premise is enticing—since 1979, Mission of Burma has, in fact, had a major shaping effect on a lot of burgeoning musicians. Unfortunately, the makers of *Not a Photograph* missed the hook. Less than one third of the film is devoted to an examination of why people cared so much about Mission of Burma in the first place. Yes, members of Sonic Youth and Gang of Four, among others, talk of their admiration for the Boston post-punks, but we never learn what they did that was so different. The footage is there. In fact, it sizzles. Show us! Tell us! As a result of the film's short shrift to the band's original incarnation, the momentous nature of this rejoining is diminished. Sure, if you already know everything about the band, you're going to be stoked about catching up with what they're doing now, but the gist of the film is that hardly anyone does know. The filmmakers begin by pointing out that most people aren't familiar with Mission of Burma. And those unfamiliar just aren't going to be as excited about watching forty-something musicians, talented as they may be, trying to recapture the energy of their scalding shows of 20 years prior. A band this great deserves to be hailed for its apex, not immortalized in its echo.

- Buck Austin