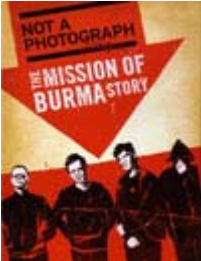


<http://www.hanginghex.com/hexmain.html>

"NOT A PHOTOGRAPH: THE MISSION OF BURMA STORY" DVD



I'll be the first to admit that I jumped on the Burma bandwagon as they were reuniting. The name was familiar to me for years, but it was just one of those things that I neglected to look into until the hype built up. Thankfully, at the time, I was living with a girlfriend who had impeccably good taste in 80's post-punk and she hipped me to the beauty of Burma. I guess I ought to forever be in her debt for that because since then those old Mission Of Burma songs (as well as some of the new ones) have become some of my favorite songs ever. For those not in the know, Mission Of Burma was an early 80's punk band out of Boston doing things in such a way that was completely different for punk. Their incredible use of swirling melody, passionate aggression, driving rhythms, and mysterious background noise made them a force to be reckoned with, but often overlooked because of their radical approach at the time. They amicably split in '83 at the peak of their regional popularity after releasing a couple singles, an ep, and a full-length due to singer/guitarist Roger Miller's increasingly frustrating tinnitus that he had developed. All the members more or less dropped out of the scene and got on with their lives, and t'he name 'Mission Of Burma' was lost.

Then, all of a sudden, in 2002 they simply decided to do it again to see what would happen. Almost 20 years later, with the same sense of modesty (actually, more like self-deprecation), and a curious 'what happens next?' attitude Mission Of Burma came back just as excellent as they had been in their heyday. I was actually lucky enough to see one of the reunion shows they did in Philly and it was incredible. They played not like a rock band delivering a show, but as three guys (and one Bob Weston behind the soundboards doing tape loops) doing something fun as friends and joking with the audience all the while busting out with more energy, passion, and conviction than anyone half their age. Not bad for a few guys approaching their 50's.

This DVD documents this revitalization, complete with live performances from a number of the shows they have done (and sporadically continue to do). The members, and people close to the band, comment on the history of the group. The members themselves are interviewed at their day jobs, their co-workers commenting on how they never knew about the band. Clint Connelly's daughter and niece say they don't understand it. It shows the members as everyday people just doing this thing and finally getting some credit, as unbelievably humble people having this incredible, beautiful music to share with others. Drummer Peter Prescott gives the most personable commentary, as he feels almost undeserving for the attention they have received since re-forming, but totally thankful at the same time. At it's most poignant you see the band go into instrumental "All World Cowboy Romance" at a NYC show and are joined onstage by members of Versus, Yo La Tengo, Sonic Youth, Gang Of Four, and (Mr. 'I Covered a Burma Song And Now People Know Who They Are') Moby... all obvious parties influenced by the group, and the Burma gang are just all smiles the whole time.

As a bonus you get about five songs of old Burma footage (including the members previous outfit, Moving Parts, doing their take on "Max Ernst"), as well as about five new/reunion performances as well. This has to be about one of the best band documentaries I've been witness to for it's study of the parties involved and the joy their music brings. Please, check this video out. But more than anything, go get a Mission Of Burma record. (MVD,

www.musicvideodistributors.com)