



## CURRENT REVIEWS

## IN STORES SOON

- >Silk Stalkings - The Complete Third Season
- >Midsomer Murders - Set Six
- >3rd Rock From The Sun - Season One
- >The Mary Tyler Moore Show - The Complete Second Season
- >Agatha Christie - Romantic Detectives/A Life In Pictures (Acorn)
- >Fingersmith
- >Style Wars (Public Art Films)
- >The Brady Bunch - The Complete Second Season
- >The High & The Mighty
- >Hetty Wainthropp Investigates - The Complete Second Series
- >Star Trek Enterprise - The Complete Second Season
- >Arisan!
- >Island In The Sky
- >The Complete Ripping Yarns (Michael Palin/Terry Jones)
- >Clarissa (British Mini-Series)

## IN STORES NOW

- >It Started In Naples
- >Mike Marshall - Gator Strut (Mobile Fidelity SACD)
- >Bodysong (DVD-Video)
- >The Rainmaker (1956)
- >City Rhythm Orchestra - Vibrant Notes DVD/CD Set
- >Another Time, Another Place
- >The Silence (1998)
- >The Inspector Lynley Mysteries Pilot, Seasons 1 & 2
- >Eric Clapton - Slowhand (SACD)
- >Swimming Upstream
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- >Prokofiev - Ivan The Terrible: Leonard Slatkin (Mobile Fidelity SACD)
- >Strange Behavior
- >Matango - Attack Of The Mushroom People
- >Bill & Ted's Most Excellent Collection

## Bodysong

Picture: C    Sound: B    Extras: B    Film: B

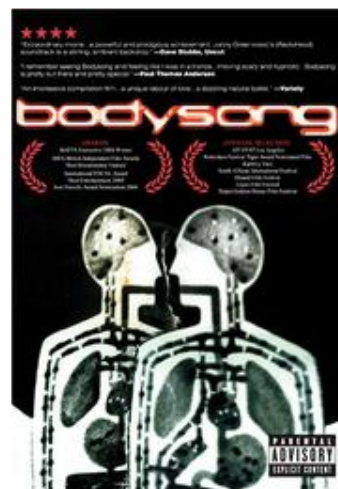
Just when you may have given up on cinema all together comes **Bodysong**, the latest in groundbreaking innovative filmmaking, which derives from some of the more recent ambitions to integrate stock footage together with music and montages to visually narrate a particular theme or themes.

The film is a mesmerizing look at humanity with love, death, sex, birth, and growth resting at the center. In the same manner as **Decasia** (reviewed on this site) the documentary pieces together footage from all over the world in a 100-year stretch of time. Jonny Greenwood from Radiohead, whose textures keep the segments linked together to create an experience rare to come by, composed the music and creates the much-needed ambiance. The film is also an interactive web experience as you can log onto [www.bodysong.com](http://www.bodysong.com) to follow-up on the images and stories that you have just witnessed.

**Bodysong** sets up new possibilities in integrating cinema and web together. The film also reemphasizes just how extraordinary moving images are. Something that we rarely think about, yet impacts us in ways we hardly can fathom. I am mindful of such films as **Koyaanisqatsi** and the other films in that Godfrey Reggio's series, **Baraka** (a film along the same vein), **1 Giant Leap** (reviewed on this site), and even the documentary **The American Nightmare** (also reviewed on this site), which took a fascinating look at how moving images have transferred into the horror genre. While viewing something like this I was also mindful of some of the earlier techniques from Russian cinema with the emphasis on montage and the ability to make a viewer feel a certain way based on what comes before and after the image. The unique use of a music score also places a particular behavior to the way we perceive the images.

Some tend to criticize material such as this because it's all footage that was previously shot with no particular rhyme or reason behind some of it, yet has been pieces together in what they feel is almost like a shuffle effect with some music overtop and voila you have a film, but there is a bit more to it than that. The editing process itself is certainly where most films obtain their identity, as most editors and even directors will tell you, so regardless of where the footage comes from, the editor is the master craftsman who must 'tell the story' with those particular pieces. Sure, it's probably a bit more expressive and there are more freedoms when you are telling a non-linear, non-narrative type of film, but there is still a craft that must take place in order to ensure the audiences involvement with your images. You are still in charge of the human emotion as you splice together random bits and try to tell a coherent story on some level.

So what exactly is the point of doing a particular project such as this? Well, perhaps it is two-fold. This is the feature debut of director Simon Pummel, who has mostly worked on short films prior to this and also co-directed


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Queen's **Made in Heaven** (1997). The first reason perhaps behind something like this is that conventional storytelling, especially in cinema is near-dead with the decline over the past few decades by the dumbing down and numbing process that places like Hollywood and TV have made all too well known. Channels like MTV have manipulated us for years with so many music videos that simply put the obvious with the obvious and very rarely create an experience anymore, but rather just a parade of the same product over and over again. We rarely get treated to music and movement being pieced together in a way that is intelligent and the same goes for modern cinema to a large degree.

As an audience we are force fed the bottom line to just about every motion picture with very little room for us to think or reason for ourselves. We are told what to think and when to think it, so something like **Bodysong** forces us back to our basic abilities to simply put together a story based on only limited pieces of information. We don't know where the story takes place, or who the characters are, we don't have plot points to try and sort out, yet we are left to the minimum which is music over images. This perhaps is one way to get viewers more assertive and the other reason for material like this is just to take independent filmmaking to a new level.

**Bodysong** is an experience unlike just about anything and it's release to DVD quite important. The DVD contains the film with a full-frame presentation of the stock footage and a 5.1 Dolby Digital mixed audio track. There is also a commentary track accompanying the film from the director and a few bonus features, including one with the director in general on making the film. There is also an exclusive interview with Jonny Greenwood on the process of composing and arranging the music score for the film, which is just as important as the film itself.

This is a difficult piece to really critique when it comes to image quality since it varies based on the source material from which it compiled together, but the overall presentation looks good with all the footage having the nostalgic and sometimes raw look that is needed to create the visual effect that the film was going for. The Dolby 5.1 is good, but DTS would have been a nice addition to since the music plays such a vital role. All in all this is one unique piece of filmmaking and the DVD is probably the best way to experience just that, as well as going onto the web to take your experience even further.

- Nate Goss