

LOVEDOLLS SUPERSTAR

Starring Redd Kross, the Lovedolls, Jello Biafra

Directed by David Markey

Music Video Distributors



Lord knows how many years ago it was, but I remember this great compilation my friend Luke had, from a tiny Californian punk label called **We Got Power**. That might have been the name of the record, too but the back cover had a photo of a window with "**Party Or Go Home**" spraypainted underneath it, so that's what we called it. It had, like, 40 bands on it, not including the bit where El Duce from the Mentors belched some obscenity or another. All the songs were a minute long, blasted out by teenage garbageheads like myself. It had White Cross, White Flag, Red Cross, all the cool color-coded bands of the day (no Blue Oyster Cult, though). Every song sounded like a nail being driven into a baseball bat. Punk junk, you know. Luke and I used to blast that record all the time, because punk rock sounds awesome when you're 14, and also because we definitely wanted to party, not go home.

We Got Power records was owned by this cat **Dave Markey**, who was in Sin 34, the worst band on the comp. That's how they got on there. Dave's next move was to film an epic, hour-long exploitation flick on Super 8. On a budget of \$250, no less. The mad, mad, mad result was 1984's **Desperate Teenage Lovedolls**, an unholy fuckin' mess of fuzzy home-movie footage and an even fuzzier (although quite rocking) soundtrack full of glammy punk. The story involved a bunch of grubby chicks who form a band and claw their way to the top of scumpit in the bombed out and bummed out streets of Hollywood. Like most things in the 80's, it promised way more than it delivered, but it did have a pretty bitchin' scene with **Steve McDonald** from Red Kross, all pimped out as high-powered band manager Johnny Tremaine, being stalked, *Trilogy of Terror* style, by a Gene Simmons doll. The rest of it I don't remember all that well. I do remember the garish yellow clamshell VHS box for it sitting somewhere near the TV at every hipster crash pad I stumbled into back then, though. It went pretty good with Pabst and skunk weed. Party or go home, man.

A year later, Markey was back with a supersized sequel, **Lovedolls Superstar**. This version even looked like a real movie in parts. It cost \$10,000 to make (still on Super 8, tho), and featured everybody from the first one, plus a few new punkers sprinkled into the mix. It's about the Lovedolls getting back together to rock the world again, but not before the convince one of 'em to give up her life as a Manson-ette cult leader. There's even a subplot in this one. Johnny Tremaine's long lost hippy brother (McDonald again) leaves his commune in the desert and ventures into big, bad Hollywood to stop the Lovedolls before they...well, I forget what his mission was, but to be fair, so did he. Anyway, everything ends up ok in the end.

In 2003, Markey was afforded the opportunity to clean up his dusty movie. He made a digital master from the original Super 8. He added some scenes, trimmed some others. It's in 5:1Dolby now. It's a spanky new Lovedolls, a meticulously

crafted 'director's cut'. "**Fully Realized**", as Markey likes to call it. So, what's this spiffy new version like? Well, it goes pretty good with Pabst and skunk weed.

Lovedolls and it's prequel are both pop-culture artifacts, and for sheer nostalgic kicks, they're a blast, but a lot of the humor is so dated even I don't remember what's supposed to be so funny. Why on earth would anybody want to assassinate Bruce Springsteen?

But hey, it all made sense at the time. Younger viewers probably won't cotton to the shaky Super 8 footage, but they might dig the cameos from Jello Biafra, Sky Saxon and a Bangle. Crypsters like you and I will wonder if it's worth the \$20 to see this junk again, and will later on decide it was. MVD's crisp DVD comes with a bonus 20th anniversary featurette, featuring a gushing Markey and most of the cast, together for the first time in decades. All in all, a swell and welcome re-release.

PS: Wow! You can download the whole We Got Power comp on the WGP website. Awesome. Party or go home, again!

Party or Go Home!

- *Sleazegrinder*

HOME