



## Various

**STAFF**

The Jettisoundz Promo Years DVD (2012)  
MVDVisual

Reviewer Rating:

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Because punk was never really that popular, and was pretty damn unpopular in the late '70s and early '80s, the records and trials of much of what happened during the genesis of alt-music has gone undocumented or washed away by the hands of time. That's why when rare gems are unearthed, they are that much more precious. This is particularly true of the compilation DVD *The Jettisoundz Promo Years*.

Jettisoundz was a U.K. "video label" that both produced promo music videos for smaller bands as well as documented the alt-music scene. Because alt-music had not yet undergone its boom, disparate bands that had little in common with each other, except a contempt for the mainstream, found themselves label mates, stage mates and even unlikely co-composers.

*The Jettisoundz Promo Years* features 50 videos from the early '80s through the end of the decade. Some videos are music videos that might have been MTV or evening show candidates while others are just live video recordings, similar to the West Coasts' target video.

Striking is the variety of acts on this DVD, and even more striking is how well they work together. The set opens with One Way System blasting out a crusty version of the Slade classic "Cum On Feel the Noize," which may either be a piss-take or a best attempt at a tribute. But, following the grimy thrasher, space rock titans Hawkwind kick into one of its newer classics, using the energy of punk, but also retaining its pro leanings.

The unlikely duo of Roy Harper and Led Zep's Jimmy Page show up to show just how far they had both gone since their '70s rock heyday. Alien Sex Fiend contributes two disparate tracks showing the band's range. "Buggin' Me" is a harsh rocker that seems to challenge Discharge in intensity and grit, but "Ignore the Machine" is one of the earliest industrial-goth tracks recorded. But, just as Alien Sex Fiend gets dark, the Toy Dolls steal the show with their classic, lighthearted "Nellie the Elephant" in a video that is as lo-fi as it is whimsical (which is to say...very.)

Perhaps the reason these different bands work so well against one another is that at the time the video format had yet to be established, so anything went. Jazz Butcher's "Meets Count Dracula"

rags on goth music with a certain appreciation much in the way the Beastie Boys' "No Sleep to Brooklyn" poked fun at arena rock. Whereas, Inca Babies try to invert common video techniques to create an abstractionist canvas on "Jerico."

And then there's Caresse P-Orridge, daughter of Throbbing Gristle's Genesis P-Orridge, covering the Jimi Hendrix tune "Are You Experienced?". It is as chaotic, rambling, maddening and hypnotically captivating as one would expect the offspring of a Throbbing Gristle member to be.

Equally interesting is the documentation of the never was-es in the pack. Little known groups such as Empress of Fur, Cud and Action Pact are each given their moment to shine, among dozens of others. And really, the uniqueness of some of the videos you've never heard of makes for a good argument that the never-was gang was unfairly overlooked.

Unfortunately, the set doesn't feature any bonus material. An interview with some of the Members involved in the filming of these works, or some of the bands involved, would be a great way to make the set informative as well as entertaining.

Due to the rarity of these selections, this set probably shouldn't be the new punchers first stop when it comes to learning about the old school, but those aging anarchists that find themselves growing wearied with hearing "1977" and "God Save the Queen" over and over and over will find the set as refreshing as it is entertaining. A long lost treasure, for sure.