



-MVD INTERVIEW-  
Interview with Ed Seamen

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# MVDvisual

A DIVISION OF MVD ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

NFT: Tell me a bit about the history of MVD.

Ed: MVD was founded in 1986 by my father, Tom Seaman, an industry veteran of more than 40 years whose background includes retailing stints with Record Hunter, Sam Goody, Musicland, CBS Retail, and wholesale experience with Jem Records. MVD initially acted primarily as a one-stop, buying all labels' music-related VHS releases and reselling to music and video stores. Getting involved with DVD early, MVD called upon its strong relationships with content holders, labels, artists, and management to become a world leader in music DVD. In 2006 MVD expanded further and launched an audio CD division based on these same strong relationships with suppliers and customers.

NFT: You have a hugely impressive catalogue, it's so vast and widespread - how do all these releases come about?

Ed: Because our focus is the format of music video as compared to a specific genre, we have concentrated on what sells well within that format. And many different genres work well within the format...what works on music DVD is more so artist driven than genre driven. Plus, our suppliers are real happy with us- and they are a diverse bunch. So that is why the catalog is so diverse.

NFT: You must be the only DVD company that manufactures, distributes and releases all it's own material...was this always the focus?

Ed: We don't manf all our own material - a lot comes in already manfd. But we are unique in our approach.

NFT: I honestly used to think that there was a real lack of punk rock DVDs when the whole DVD-explosion came about, but MVD literally, single-handedly changed that and made tons of punk rock DVD available, how did this come about?

Ed: We like punk rock - that is a big part of it. Initially the mindset on DVD from the collective industry braintrust was "DVD has to be excellent quality, and has to be true 5.1 surround and has to be cost \$50,000 to create and this that and the other thing." We didn't read the rule book - our belief was that consumers want to buy collectibles from their favorite act; and that sometimes means putting out rough footage of a band when they were great. I have always said, I'd rather see shitty footage of a band when they were great vs great footage of a band when they were shitty.

NFT: You've put out 3 GG Allin DVDs so far...these are something that are very crucial because there's a real lack of good-quality, professional GG DVDs around...how did these come about? Was Merle Allin involved?

Ed: We have actually done 4 GG DVDs - three from Merle's archives and the absolute classic "Hated" by Todd Phillips (who went on from Hated to direct films like "Old School" and Starsky & Hutch". GG in many ways was the ultimate visual artist. We are doing a new version of "Hated" later this year, and also have a Murder Junkies DVD in production.

NFT: It seems that there's a real love and passion behind the releases put out by MVD because it seems like a lot would only appeal to a tight niche and even an underground market so there must really be a strong MVD desire to release this stuff which is so great to see...

Ed: Like I said, we like punk rock. Plus, it is a joy to sink the time, effort, and emotion into our key releases, and then see them commercially and critically succeed. This is the best part of our job.

NFT: Was it always the plan from the start to make the most diverse and wide-ranging DVD label in the world? There truly can't be another company that includes The Smiths, GG Allin, Happy Mondays, Kate Bush, Duke Ellington, Dwarves, Rolling Stones etc etc in their roster...

Ed: Part of the company is a wholesale/onestop operation, and that division's mission statement is to be the world's best supplier of music video. This carries over to the DVD Label division to some degree.

NFT: How does the researching for releases go? There's a lot of alternative and obscure material being put out in all kinds of genres so there must really be some people who know their stuff!

Ed: We have a lot of content that comes to us - artists/management trying to find distribution. Then we look for content that we think makes sense and that has strong potential.

NFT: Tell me a bit about Eclectic DVD and it's link to MVD...

Ed: We launched this division as a way to carry and brand oddball films that we think make sense - we didn't want to dilute MVD's music image but feel that there is opportunity for this type of film. How do you say "No, we don't want to release Jesus Christ Vampire Hunter"?

NFT: You carry a lot of DVDs that aren't put out by MVD too, stuff on Cherry Red, Classic Rock, Secret etc - are you the distributor for these DVD labels?

Ed: Yes - that is exactly right

NFT: How do MVD releases get distributed throughout Europe because there's a serious MVD presence here and the DVDs are easily available in bigger stores as well as independent shops which is awesome...

Ed: We work primarily through Play It Again Sam for the continent - they are our distributor.

NFT: MVD is the most prolific DVD label I have ever seen...the continuous string of new releases in unbelievable! How does the funding for this go? Is funding ever an issue?

Ed: We are very (financially) conservative - we have built excellent relationships and have a strong reputation for paying and not screwing around our suppliers. We are very cautious about funding large sums as this tends to put companies into trouble. MVD is 100% debt free.

NFT: Do you ever have a problem getting any of your releases in stores? GG, Dwarves etc?

Ed: Oh yeah - it can be very difficult getting placement in stores but the fans are out there...

NFT: You're releasing the Skeptix DVD soon, how did that come about? That was put out by the band's own Thunk label over here.

Ed: This is something we carry on the wholesale/onestop side - where we carry everything available.

NFT: Is there any release that you're super proud of?

Ed: A few - Rockers, GG Allin Hated, The New York Dolls, Iggy & The Stooges, Devo 1980...

MVD - [www.mvdb2b.com/mvd](http://www.mvdb2b.com/mvd)