

BEST
OF
2013



BROUGHT TO YOU BY
GEICO

DVD REVIEW



A Stone Roses documentary sticks to the sunny side

By Josh Modell • Dec 4, 2013 • 12AM

C+

The Stone Roses: Made Of Stone

Director: Shane Meadows

Runtime: 97 minutes

Cast: Documentary

The worst mistake a music documentary can make is to pull its punches and hide its subjects' warts. What makes a good one compelling to viewers who don't fall into the band's immediate fan base is a mixture of conflict and triumph, not just a

highlight reel. *The Stone Roses: Made Of Stone*, which was directed by an admittedly huge fan of the band—British filmmaker Shane Meadows, most famous for the excellent *This Is England*—leaves out or glosses over the dirt in such a blatant way that it almost distracts from its ultimate goal of documenting the



There's a good story in that reunion: The Stone Roses, a Manchester band that burned very bright but very quick in the late '80s, split up in slow motion after the release of a long-awaited but ultimately disappointing second album. The blood was bad, but the songs—at least those from the self-titled debut—were excellent, and who doesn't want to see old friends bury the hatchet and re-write their own ending? The footage of the band re-convening for a press conference and subsequent rehearsals in 2011 is fantastic; the nervous energy is palpable, and the members adeptly handle questions about their lack of desire to reunite the band. (Guitarist John Squire, just two years before, had created a piece of artwork that read "I have no desire whatsoever to desecrate the grave of seminal Manchester pop group The Stone Roses," and singer Ian Brown had taken to performing with members of a Stone Roses cover band, the latter of which isn't mentioned here.)

But the reasons for the initial breakup are never made particularly explicit: They're written off as problems with management, when in fact it was fairly well known that members of the band couldn't stand to be around each other, and had difficulty handling fame. The softball documentary approach becomes clear during a 2012 reunion gig in Amsterdam, when drummer Alan "Reni" Wren bolted from the venue prior to the encore, pissing off both the fans and Brown, who announced to the audience, "The drummer's a cunt." Instead of pursuing that story, Meadows leaves the tour ("The last thing anyone wants is a camera rammed in their face") while the rest of the press speculates on whether the band is done for—again. Cut to: 15 minutes of glory from the band's Manchester homecoming shows, which sold more than 200 thousand tickets in a matter of minutes. The Amsterdam incident is never mentioned. It's simply swept under the rug like so much of the band's history.

If *Made Of Stone* had spent half as much time exploring the personalities of these

notoriously reticent guys—and Meadows clearly had unprecedented access—it might have painted a much more balanced picture of where they came from and where they might go. As it stands, the film offers brief glimpses into the past, a grand look at the triumphant present, and no hint as to where these guys might go next, and not much suggestion even of where their heads are beyond the current moment. Do they want to keep doing this? How does it feel? *Made Of Stone* is fine as fan service, but ultimately feels more like a promotional tool than an insightful movie.



Twenty-five years on, there's reason to keep *MST3K* circulating

SUGGESTED READS



R.I.P. Peter O'Toole



Are you Sarah Connor? No, *Game Of Thrones'* Emilia Clarke is

27 comments



Join the discussion...

Oldest ▾ Community

Share

Login ▾



Mohamad Taufiq Morshidi · 12 days ago

It was bands like Stone Roses, 808 State, Happy Mondays and DJs like Mike Pickering and Laurent Garnier that made me look up to Madchester with really high regard.