

BALLBUSTER

<http://www.ballbustermusic.com/>

Hard Vision

January / February 2009

Martin Atkins

16 Days In China DVD

MVD Visual

by Jonathan Mariante

Martin Atkins (who has played in PIL and NIN, among others) did something rather interesting-he went to China to check out the music scene in Beijing, and made his visit into a documentary film. Martin managed to hook up with a number of bands, who play a variety of musical styles-some punk rock, some goth, some who invent styles of their own, by mixing modern music with traditional Chinese music. He compared the music scene in China to that in America and the West in general, and said the Chinese scene reminded him of the old punk/new wave scene in London and New York in the late 70s and early 80s. An interesting comparison. He also said that a Beijing club called D-22 is picking up where CBGB's left off. Martin worked with several bands, produced their music, and even managed to sign some. He said signing them was a bit difficult because the Chinese musicians are hesitant to trust anyone from outside the Beijing scene, but he managed to convince a few of the bands in the end. It was interesting to hear these bands and see Martin work and interact with them. It was truly East meeting West, and showing that there really wasn't a whole lot of difference. Everyone loves the music, and rock and roll reaches all four corners of the globe. One might not expect there to be a rock scene at all in a country like China, but there seems to be a very active one. With the help of people like Martin Atkins, some of these bands might get some exposure in the West. Martin also pointed out some of the similarities between China and America, focusing on one thing in particular-Starbucks! Beijing has its own Starbucks, and Martin seemed a bit distressed at this. At one point he says, "It seemed like Starbucks manipulates the media as much as the government...Starbucks of the Chinese government, name you poison!" Then he gags! All kidding aside, this is a fascinating DVD. This is the first look I ever got inside the Chinese rock scene and it sure was interesting. They seem to have some good bands. As cliché as this may sound, this again shows that music is an international language. Rock on China, and don't let those commies bring you down! If they do, go grab some Starbucks, LOL! Some videos by the featured bands are included as bonus features, so you get a sample of their music.

