



TV / FILM

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DVD Review: *Sixteen Days In China* - A Documentary By Martin Atkins

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What would you do? How far would you go if you were a musician and record producer who was sick and tired of all the bullshit involved in the North American music scene to find something new and exciting? Where would you be willing to travel in order to find bands and musicians whose first priority was making great music instead of becoming stars?

Well, if you're [Martin Atkins](#) and you're with a record company called [Invisible Records](#) and you'd heard that there was something exciting in China, you get on a plane and fly off to Beijing for sixteen days to check it out. Your hope is to get some bands into the recording studio, and even better sign them to contracts so you can produce a CD of their music back in the States. What a great idea!



Last year I was able to listen to the results of that trip on the two recordings that Atkins produced as a result of that visit, [Look Directly Into The Sun](#), a compilation of the bands he recorded while over there, and [China Dub Soundsystem](#), a series of tracks that Atkins worked up with traditional Chinese and Tibetan music he recorded in Beijing, and overdubs recorded in Chicago back at his own studio. I remember being blown away by the music on *Look Directly Into The Sun* as it was everything that I had loved about bands like The Clash, The Ramones, and all the really good punk from both sides of the Atlantic. I could see how Atkins, former drummer with Public Image Limited (PIL), Nine Inch Nails, and other post punk/industrial bands, would have fallen in love with the music and the bands.

So, this year when the opportunity arose to see him tell the story of that trip on DVD I jumped at the chance to check it out. We hear so much about China these days that any opportunity to get some firsthand information from someone who has been over there would be interesting enough, but a DVD about recording punk rock musicians in China sounded too good to pass up. What I hadn't counted on was what an interesting, honest, and just flat out funny man Martin Atkins is, and the combination of him, the music, and his voyage make *Sixteen Days In China*, produced by [MVD Visual](#), highly entertaining, thoughtful, and bloody informative.

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Richard Marcus is a long-haired Canadian iconoclast who writes reviews and opines on the world as he sees it at [Leap In The Dark](#) and [Epic India Magazine](#).

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