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Various Artists

Sixteen Days in China DVD

Review by Gary Hill

This is one of the coolest music documentaries I've ever seen. I'd highly recommend this for anyone who has a quest for new understandings and cultural conceptualizations – oh, and a love of music wouldn't hurt. So, what exactly is this film? The story itself really tells a lot of the picture.

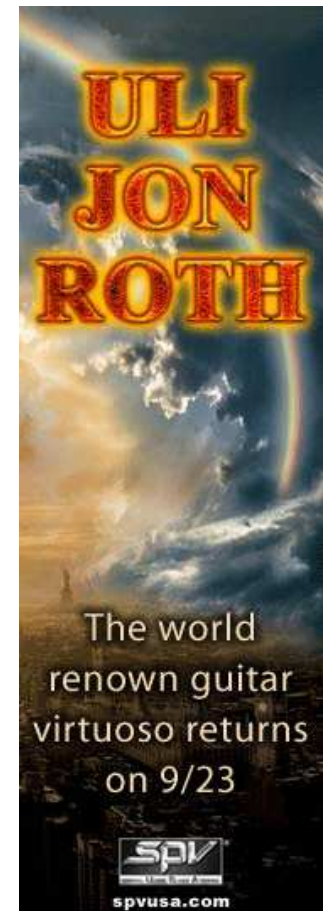
This is a creation of Martin Atkins. That name might be familiar to some of you. He's played drums for such huge bands as Public Image Limited (with Johnny ("Rotten" Lydon), Nine Inch Nails and Ministry. He also has his own band called "Pig Face." When you've done all of those things, what's left to do that hasn't been done before? Go to China and find all the interesting musicians plying their form of rock music in the heart of the Red Star. Why not document your journey at the same time?

That pretty much sizes up what you get, but it really only touches on what you get. Atkins is insightful, intelligent and witty. He's got a great sense of humor. He also seems to have an innate ability to know what's of interest. He makes it all work. Don't get me wrong, the music scene in China really helps. And Atkins draws comparisons (and contrasts) between the happening scenes of the 1970's and this scene.

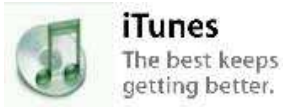
You will find your understandings of music and culture challenged and enhanced. You'll laugh. You'll feel like you are more of a world citizen after viewing this. The truth is, you'll enjoy it. This might be the best music documentary I've ever seen (OK, besides "This is Spinal Tap"). It's definitely the best one I've seen this year. I can't recommend this enough. One caveat, though. Those with kids will probably want to make sure they are well out of ear-shot when you view this one due to language issues (and no I don't mean Chinese to English translations).



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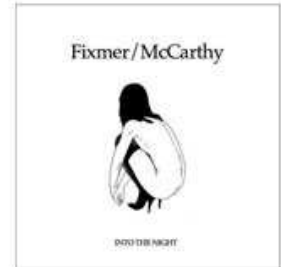


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