

METRO SPIRIT

AUGUSTA'S INDEPENDENT VOICE

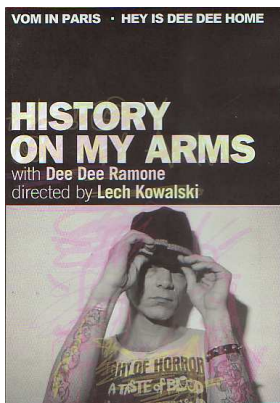
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"History on my Arms"

Directed by Lech Kowalski

BY **DINO LULL**



"History on my Arms"
MVD Visual

AUGUSTA, GA - Directed by Lech Kowalski, the DVD "History on my Arms" contains three videos and a music CD of the late, great Dee Dee Ramone, legendary bassist for the Ramones.

Comprised of candid interviews, "History on my Arms" tells the tale of Dee Dee Ramone and his adventures with heroin in New York during the late '70s as well as his time in Paris roughly 10 years later when he was involved in an aborted attempt at putting together a punk rock supergroup.

The title video is a medley of photos, Dee Dee playing bass, and the now-deceased Ramone describing the stories behind his tattoos, many of them often involving drug use and the various women in his life told in a "that's just the life we lived" sort of way. Unfortunately, compared to the other two videos on the DVD, the section titled "History on my Arms" is actually the least tolerable of all.

Next, there is "Vom in Paris" where one of the few surviving members of the Paris group describes his experiences during that tumultuous time.

Finally, the best part of the DVD is the part called "Hey is Dee Dee Home," the title taken from the song "Chinese Rocks," and actually containing everything found on the History in my Arms section plus more. In this section, Dee Dee comes off as both a veteran drug-abusing punk as well as simply a good-hearted person. At times, especially when he is talking to his cat, Ramone can be seen for what he also was: just an old man living on his own in a shabby little apartment, no different than anyone a person might run in to on the street.

But, the stories Dee Dee tells really paint a magnificent picture. He tells of the confusion dealing with the song "Chinese Rocks," his drug use, the women in his life and eventually the near violent conclusion to his time in Paris. The cinematography is well done and the interview is real, candid and fun.

The only real problem with the documentary is that it is aimed at fans of Dee Dee Ramone and the '70s punk scene. While some fans know about Johnny Thunders, Stiv Bators or the different women Dee Dee dated; for others, the names do not mean much. If the viewer is in the know, they understand the history of the people Dee Dee describes, but for everyone else they are just names on the lips of an old ex-junkie rock 'n' roller. For the fans this is Dee Dee at his best, telling the tales that fueled his life and those of the people who stood beside him in the never say die world of the New York punk scene.

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