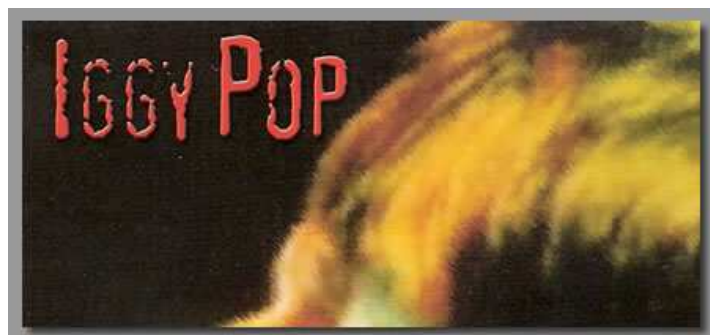




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Roll Back

by Peter Aaron

Iggy Pop— *Lust For Life DVD*
(ABC Entertainment)

Various Artists— *Punk in London DVD*
(MVD Visual)

Various Artists— *Punk in England DVD*
(MVD Visual)

Dee Dee Ramone— *History on My Arms DVD/CD*
(MVD Visual)

D.O.A.— *The Men of Action DVD/CD*
(MVD Visual/Sudden Death Records)

In case you weren't aware, the 62-and-still-rockin' Iggy Pop is widely considered to be—as the opening credits of *Lust For Life* spell out—the godfather of punk. And though the argument can be made that punk's lineage extends much farther back than Pop's arrival, the fact remains that pretty much every punk outfit from the late 70s onward—from the Ramones to the Birthday Party to the White Stripes—owes more than a little to the Ig and his primal late 60s/early 70s band, the Stooges. Filmed for European TV in 1986, *Lust For Life* chronicles the singer's early solo career and nascent Michigan days with the Stooges, who split in 1974 but would reunite in 2003. The scenes of the band's recently fallen guitarist, Ron Asheton, touring old haunts and demonstrating his technique in his mom's basement are downright precious.

German director Wolfgang Böhld shot *Punk in London* and its companion volume, *Punk in England*, when he was a Munich Film School student. *Punk in London* has riveting, raw clips of the Jam, Chelsea, the Adverts, X-Ray Spex, Subway Sect, and others; extras include an interview with the director and the entire explosive Clash set whose songs pepper the main feature. *Punk in England* includes interviews with the Boomtown Rats' Bob Geldof and more live Clash, Jam, Adverts, and their fellow first-wavers Ian Dury, Spizz Energi, Siouxsie and the Banshees, and adds post-punkers Madness, the Specials, the Pretenders, and laughable mod revivalists Secret Affair; a bonus doc, "Women in Rock," has great interviews with the Slits and the underrated Girlschool. Pretty cool for a couple of school projects, really. (Reggae in a Babylon, Böhld's look at the young British reggae scene, is also out on MVD Visual.)

Of the five releases covered here, *History on My Arms*, which compiles three films centering on Dee Dee Ramone, far surpasses the others in nailing the essence of its subject. Then again, director Lech Kowalski didn't have to do much. Even off stage, the late Ramones bassist was endlessly and unwittingly entertaining, a human cartoon character; it was just a matter of Kowalski (who also made the 1980 Sex Pistols doc *D.O.A.*) plunking him under boom lights and letting him be himself. Which is exactly what he does for "Hey is Dee Dee Home," the disc's stark 2003 core feature. In his trademark Queens brogue, Ramone speaks his piece in unassuming and self-deprecating fashion, showing off his numerous tattoos, telling the stories behind them, and waxing humorous about his days in and out of the Ramones. The short "Vom in Paris" stars drummer Vom Ritchie recounting the tale of the doomed punk super group Ramone had attempted to form with the likewise departed Stiv Bators and Johnny Thunders, while the title featurette culls outtakes from "Hey is Dee Dee Home." The accompanying CD of lo-fi apartment jams with Dee Dee dicking around on guitar, however, is for diehards only.

Formed in 1978, Canadian band D.O.A. (no relation to Kowalski's Pistols

flick) is widely credited with having coined the term hardcore as the name for punk's faster, harder variant via the group's 1981 sophomore album Hardcore '81. The Men of Action celebrates three decades of the band's tough, melodic, politically charged rock 'n' roll (think sped-up Clash) with 26 live and promo vids by ever-changing lineups. Perhaps unsurprisingly, it's the early songs that hold up best: "The Prisoner," "World War 3," "New Age," "America the Beautiful." Negatives: The DVD extra voiceover by leader Joey Shithead, aka Joe Keithley, is uh, less than compelling, and the included CD of Northern Avenger, D.O.A.'s latest studio album, is slick and formulaic. But a winning package for fans, nevertheless.—Peter Aaron

Iggy Pop: www.seeofsound.com.

Punk in London, Punk in England, Dee Dee Ramone, D.O.A.:
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