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Sid Vicious - **Sid! - By Those Who Really Knew Him(dvd)** [Odeon Entertainment / MVD Visual - 2009]

This hour & an half documentary attempts to give a clear & complete look at the life of Punk Icon & Sex Pistols bass player Sid vicious. And while it's often enjoyable & sometimes insightful film on the whole it rather treads ground that has already being covered before in various books & films over the years since Sid death.

The key figures interviewed for the documentary are: Jah Wobble (Public Image Ltd & solo work)- who met Sid at London's Kingsway College in the early 70's and became one his main friends. Alan Jones- who worked at Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood SEX boutique shop & first became aware of Sid visiting the shop. Viv Albertine- who was in female punk band the Slits & befriended Sid as well as forming a short lived band with him. There are a few more talking heads too who weren't really friends more associates & admirers in the form of :Glen Matlock(the original Pistols bass player before Sid replaced him) Marco Pirroni(who was in or involved with Siouxsie & The Banshees, Adam & The Ants, Sinéad O'Connor, etc), Steve Severin(Siouxsie & The Banshees), Caroline Coon(a rather pretentious artist & writer who talks about Sid's beauty), Ron Whatts (100 club promoter) & Peter Gravevell(a Photographer-who took quite a few pictures of Sid). But the most glaring problem about the whole project is the lack of John Lyndon(aka Johnny Rotten) who was one of Sid's main friends & the person that brought him to the Sex Pistols; how you can subtitled a documentary "from those who really knew him" and not included this key figure is beyond me really.



The film starts from the "early years" which is a little misleading as this period is when Sid was at Kingsway six form College in the 70's; so there's no mention or even photographs of his childhood which gives the whole thing a rather unbalanced feeling. Anyway the rest of the film travels through his time on the London punk scene, through to becoming a member of the Pistols, to him meeting Nancy Spungen; their drug use & ultimate her death from a drug overdose when Sid was with her. And of course Sid's own death 6 or 7 months after Spungen's death.

As I've said early-on there's nothing very new or earth-shattering presented or uncovered by the film. A few interesting moments come when Wobble talks about visting Sid's flat where he lived with his mother with both mother & son doing drugs together, or 100 club promoter Ron Whatts talking about the trouble that Sid caused in the club on & off stage

All told it's an interesting enough film for those who know little about Sid & have an interest in Punk History & his iconic status with-in the genre. But as a full & in-depth character study & overlook at his life & times it's more than a little lacking. The DVD comes with a cd of Sid's solo work & a biography booklet; but sadly I can't comment on either of theses as I was only sent a burnt DVD of the film for review.

KUDOS:

Roger Batty

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