

Refused



REFUSED

Refused Are Fucking Dead

Chronicling the last days of Sweden's most important punk export, *Refused Are Fucking Dead* is an uncompromising look at a band falling apart at the seams. Touring on the brilliant and at the time, woefully unappreciated *The Shape of Punk to Come*, the band find themselves devoid of passion while performing across Europe and America. The pain of these final performances is written on the face of every member and the incredibly articulate interviews that are inter-cut with the dramatic visuals create an unbelievable feeling of anxiety and helplessness. Including footage of their final show, which was shut down by the police, this short (less than 40 minutes) doc is bigger than *Refused*; it's about getting lost in something that used to mean the world to you. Another interesting feature of this disc is that the band's landmark *The Shape of Punk to Come* is assembled here entirely from live performances. However, unlike the top-quality live clips that are included in the actual documentary, these are all single-camera videos without board sound, making them boring and hard to listen to. The band's two videos ("Rather Be Dead" and "New Noise") are also included, but what is really important is the doc itself; everything else is

just gravy. (Burning Heart/Epitaph)
Sam Sutherland

Did the film offer you a sense of proper closure with the band?

Guitarist/director Kristofer Steen: At least for me, yeah. It wasn't something that I expected. It was over and done when the band broke up, but once I actually finished the film, I felt that these issues that we hadn't really talked about had been resolved. I hate to use the word "closure," because it sounds very Dr. Phil, but it was cathartic.

What's been the reception to the film from other members?

They like it. It's a very honest reflection of how the band members felt about the band, and how they felt about the end of the band. I'm sure they might have wanted to include some other aspects of the band, like the political side of *Refused*, which I didn't focus on at all.

Were you surprised by the finished product?

When I look at the film and I think about my feelings when I started it, I'm kind of amazed where it ended up. I didn't realise that the film I was making was *The Tragedy of Refused*. I felt like a puppet, in some weird way.
Sam Sutherland

CAPTAIN BEEFHEART: UNDER REVIEW

This budget documentary makes every mistake a rock doc can: it's comprised almost entirely of filmed interviews with rock historians and aged Magic Band members romanticising or belittling the past, the editing is mind-numbingly boring, cheesy effects abound as still photos float by and the British narrator recites common knowledge with tempestuous grandeur. When they actually do bust out some wicked footage (like a video for Beefheart's debut single, "Diddy Wah Diddy"), it's truncated after one verse to let the old farts grow more senile before our eyes. (MVD)

Kevin Hainey

COACHELLA

North America's best two-day music fest celebrates with this look at the event from all angles. An introduction to newcomers and a refresher for attendees, *Coachella* handpicks the most colourful artists and best performances from the likes of Radiohead, the Arcade Fire, the Pixies, Björk, the White Stripes and the Flaming Lips. Also included is a second disc with a selection of interviews with random bands, but it plays out like a slapdash footnote. (Goldenvoice/Epitaph)

Cam Lindsay

MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE

Live On the Murder Scene

Love 'em or hate 'em, My Chemical Romance aren't the poseurs every naysayer would have you believe. One DVD contains a video diary that tells of the band's history, from their inception and time spent on Eyeball Records to singer Gerard Way's alcoholism and the recording of 2004's platinum *Three Cheers For Sweet Revenge*. Though the repetition of quotes gets a little trying, it gives some great insight into this mainstream phenomenon while showcasing their very different personalities. A second DVD features live performances, proving they're a competent stage act that know how to entertain. An accompanying CD of these performances and two unreleased goodies make this a must have for fans. (Reprise)

Cam Lindsay

(the sample "I'm a driver, I'm a winner, things are gonna change, I can feel it" is from here), but with *Kill the Moonlight* director Steven Hanft created the perfect Generation X anti-hero in Chance, a stock car racing dreamer whose intent to raise enough money to soup up his Camaro for the big race leads him to petty theft, selling drugs and screwing his drug supplier's girlfriend. This beautifully flawed slacker classic has finally been given its due. (Plexifilm, www.plexifilm.com)

Kevin Hainey

MRS. HENDERSON PRESENTS

(Directed by Stephen Frears)

Judi Dench earned an Oscar nomination as the titular Mrs. Henderson, a wealthy widow who seeks out some fun when her husband dies two years before World War II. She stumbles upon a closed London theatre she decides to reopen for business. Hiring Vivian Van Damme (Bob Hoskins) as the theatre manager, she quickly realises she needs a gimmick: enter nude women. As expected, the Windmill Theatre becomes a phenomenon, and both the drama and comedy unfold amidst air raid sirens and bombings. Full of highbrow comedy and featuring a charming story based on true

events, *Mrs. Henderson Presents* isn't remarkable. Where it goes right is in its casting, concocting a delicious chemistry between the two leads that is sweet, conflicted and hilarious. Also noteworthy are the marvellous costumes and the set design, best exemplified in the stage productions and the wartime shots of Piccadilly Circus and Central London, which Frears admits were all electronically created based on photographs. The director's commentary is filled with enjoyable witticisms and spirit, as you'd expect, with Frears laughing along to key funny moments and noting that there were ongoing arguments over whether or not it was a true story. The "making of" featurette touches on the real Windmill Theatre, including interviews with the original dancers and nude models, which make the film all the more enjoyable for its accurate, playful depiction. (Alliance Atlantis)

Cam Lindsay

WONDER SHOWZEN: SEASON ONE

The *Wonder Showzen* phenomenon hasn't caught on north of the 49th, in part because we only just got MTV, the former music channel that airs it. It's a twisted, "not for kids" parody that steals

from *Sesame Street*, *The Electric Company*, *The Muppets* and other children's programming to create a disturbing and surprisingly smart show. Broken into "theme" episodes — birth, nature, history — it looks like acid flashback television but beneath its surface is some clever play on the nature of entertainment. Season one's finale, on patience, plays out incredibly slowly for its first 12 minutes, then runs that whole half again in reverse, including some backwards-spoken lines that only patience rewards, appropriately enough. The most shocking segments come from "Beat Kids," (a youngster street interview segment whose theme song includes two punch noises to accompany "Beat Kids!"), where adults are cornered by mic-wielding youngsters asking inappropriate questions, like combing Wall Street asking, "Who did you exploit today?" The ultimate "Beat Kids" segment includes a small child dressed as Adolf Hitler asking people, "What's wrong with kids today?" If that strikes you as subversively funny, *Wonder Showzen* just might be your new favourite show. Plus: commentaries, outtakes, story time with Flava Flav and more. (MTV/Paramount)

James Keast

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