

# SKA PUNK AND OTHER JUNK

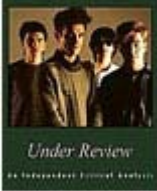
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### DVD REVIEWS

#### THE SMITHS



#### The Smiths: Under Review

**Starring:** The Smiths, Stephen Street, John Porter, Kenny Jones, Craig Gannon

**Studio:** Music Video Distribution

I've become a huge Smiths fan over the last few years. I never listened to them before 2001, probably because they were depressing or something. I just wasn't into morbid, new wave rock bands back in high school and listened to more cheerie things like Gwar & Ozzy. Well I also listened to oldies but you can just forget I said that! But thankfully I got into them and haven't stopped listening to them at least once a day since then. This DVD isn't a live concert DVD sadly, but it's a documentary analyzing all of the Smiths discography and performances. Maybe one day MVD will release a Smiths concert for us fans?

This DVD extensively explores The Smiths' music and explains how they are one of the most important & influential bands of the 1980's. I guess people consider the band to be indie for some reason but I just don't see it. I see them as a dark new wave 80's band, how is that indie? But whatever, this DVD was really interesting since I'm a big fan of the Smiths now. Obviously if you don't like the band or Morrissey, you won't enjoy this at all. I'm finding more and more documentaries on bands to be interesting because it's cool to see how bands got their start, what their problems were & unfortunately, how the bands ended. People always talk about Morrissey this, Morrissey that; but it seems Johnny Marr was just an important ingredient to the Smiths as Morrissey was. All the producers and critics on this documentary were going crazy for him and how brilliant a guitar player he was. I knew the guy had some awesome guitar riffs and beats, but didn't think or realize how big of a part he was. This documentary is different than others because the people being interviewed talk about each single the band had, and how it was good or bad. This is definitely more of a critical analysis of the Smiths than a straight up documentary but I still liked watching it.

You find out towards the end of the documentary that the group wasn't getting along that much, and Johnny Marr said he was going to depart from the band. I never really read up on how the band broke up but I now I know. I never knew there was a fifth member of the Smiths until this DVD. Craig Gannon was present on the DVD and told his side of the story. The critics thought he had a great chance but didn't step up when it mattered, or something along those lines. I guess the guy left because he was being treated poorly and didn't get any respect. There definitely seemed to be a lot of giant egos and problems among the band but what band doesn't have that you know? I wish the members of the Smith would put their feelings for each other behind them and rejoin the group for one last our.

The DVD has a lot of TV appearances and videos for you to watch, but that's within the documentary itself. Sadly, you can't watch them solely on their own. But you can see footage of "Hand In Glove," "This Charming Man," "What Difference Does It Make," "How Soon Is Now,"



"Yes I look like him..."

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MOR

"Heaven Knows I'm Miserable Now," "The Queen Is Dead," "Bigmouth Strikes Again," "Panic," and "Girlfriend In A Coma." I always liked the video for "Stop Me If You Think You've Heard This One Before" and you can see that one on here as well. As I was watching this DVD, I've come to realize how I have morphed into Morrissey without even knowing it. My hair seemed to get higher and puffier throughout the years. It's scary how much I resemble him once he has those big ugly 80's glasses on too. And hey, I sing the best in karaoke when it's a Smiths song! But anyway, back to the documentary about the Smiths. The DVD extras contain extended interviews with the people in the doc and there's also a quiz about the Smiths. Since I suck at quizzes, I decided to not partake in the Smiths quiz.

If you are big Smiths fan and like to know more about the group from a critics point of view, than Under Review is something to purchase. You aren't going to get a full concert but there is some footage of that on here. The Smiths Under Review is a very interesting documentary to watch.

**Features:**

Extended Interviews  
Smiths Interactive Game  
Biographies  
Beyond DVD Section

**Video:**

4:3

**Audio:**

Stereo Sound Mix

**Favorite Scenes:**

I didn't really have any favorite scenes but liked hearing This Charming Man and Panic.

**Rating:** NR

**Running Time:** 88 mins

**Extras Rating:** ★★

**Overall Rating:** ★★★★★

**Reviewer:** Bryan Kremkau

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