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THE SMITHS "UNDER REVIEW" (MVD)

By [Tim Den](#)

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Presents the bone basics adequately... and that's about it.



Under Review is a documentary series in which people involved with certain artists – **The Smiths**, in this case – get together and offer a “critical analysis” of said artist’s career and impact upon society. This DVD is not authorized by any member of the band, but does include plenty of music video snippets, rare interview footage, and insight from “credible” talking heads. Usually, I’d be pretty skeptical of such a concept, but this installment features producers Stephen Street and John Porter – who helmed most of The Smiths’ recordings – longtime roadie Grant Showbiz, and even Factory Records head honcho Tony Wilson, so it’s not like a bunch of no-names sitting around shooting their mouths off. The panel of “experts” go through the band’s history, from inception to implosion, highlighting historical moments, musical greats and no-so-greats, in an effort to present The Smiths as they saw ‘em. So is the DVD worth watching? If you’re a diehard fan, no. It

doesn’t offer any new insights – apart from a few segments with second guitarist Craig Gannon – but does serve as a good overview for newcomers. Each single and album is dissected, offering just enough of a taste to people who might want to delve into the band’s catalog. Sure, some of the journalists tend to talk nonsense (“It was as if their music came from the future!”), but overall the chronological presentation of the works is done rather well.

The low point of the DVD, however, is the very little attention paid to *why* The Smiths broke up in ‘87. Okay, everyone knows that guitarist Johnny Marr and vocalist Morrissey had internal problems, but – without ever mentioning any specifics – the DVD simply states “internal problems broke the band up” and leaves it at that. What *exactly* transpired between the two men? *How* did tension build between their personalities? Were there any specific instances where the friction was apparent to outsiders? Give us *anything*, please! Because, at the end of the day, their fans are still puzzled as to why the two main creative forces of The Smiths refuse to reconnect even 20 years afterward. There’s enough behind the scenes there to really uncover: so why not do it?

Approach this installment of *Under Review* with caution: know that you probably won’t find revealing secrets, but at least appreciate the fact that it presents the bone basics adequately.

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Tim Den

[Psapp "The Only Thing I Ever Wanted" \(Domino\)](#)

A deftly interwoven collection of sequences, and well-delivered vo [The Smiths "Under Review" \(MVC\)](#) Presents the bone basics adequa that’s about it.

[To This Day "Chapter 1: Between Bridges" \(1981\)](#)

Slow, heavy metalcore with lots o bass.

[Zero 7 "The Garden" \(Atlantic\)](#)

The same ocean, though perhaps shoreline.

[Rise Against "The Sufferer & the Witness" \(Geffen\)](#)

Just try and deny these choruses



[Ivan Bittertizov fucking hates you Wicked Wisdom, Queensryche, Y Angels & Airwaves, Revolution o](#)

[The Unholy Alliance Tour](#) live at Aragon Ballroom (Chicago 20th, 2006.

[Intonation Music Festival](#)

live at Union Park (Chicago, IL) Ju and 25th.

[Radiohead](#)

live at Auditorium Theatre (Chica June 20th, 2006.

[Mogwai](#)

live at Avalon (Boston, MA) May 1



Psapp - Tricvcle