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Uprising

By Ian Gormely

Some would argue that trying to give a complete history of a musical genre is next to impossible. Others would say framing a genre through the lens of one band is just stupid. But that's not stopping the makers of *Metal Machine Music: Nine Inch Nails and the Industrial Uprising*, which tries to accomplish both at once. The film begins with a brief but informative history of industrial music from its '70s art-rock beginnings up through its fusion with dance and metal cultures in the '80s. Heavy emphasis is rightfully placed on Throbbing Gristle, whose singer (Genesis P-Orridge) is included in the film's small number of interview subjects, and Ministry, whose Al Jourgensen is not. Focus quickly shifts however to Nine Inch Nails, who as far as the filmmakers are concerned, are the be all and end all of the genre — save a brief mention of '90s NIN-aping acts Stabbing Westward and Filter, the history of industrial music stops with them. It should come as a shock to no one with even a modicum of knowledge about Nine Inch Nails that Trent Reznor didn't authorize this doc; he being a notorious control freak. So immediately we're denied any sort of definitive account of Nine Inch Nails' rise to stardom since the main dude involved is conspicuously absent. The filmmakers manage to dig up former band-mates Chris Vrenna and Richard Patrick, who offer the only first-hand accounts in the film. The rest of the critical analysis is given by music media types, including Toronto's own Alan Cross. An extended interview with Genesis P-Orridge is included in the package, as are a handful of other extended interviews. But save for a rental out of curiosity, this one's better left alone until Reznor decides on his own legacy. (MVD)



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