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## Metal Machine Music: Nine Inch Nails and the Industrial Uprising

Score: **85%**  
Rating: **Not Rated**  
Publisher: **MVD Entertainment Group**  
Region: **A**  
Media: **DVD/1**  
Running Time: **136 Mins.**  
Genre: **Documentary/Live Performance**  
Audio: **Stereo Sound Mix**  
Subtitles: **None**

### Features:

Special Feature: The Genesis of Industrial Contributor Biographies

I remember when a buddy of mine turned me on to Nine Inch Nails. He gave me a *Broken* EP and told me to start there, with the caveat that it was scary and intense meaningful caveat coming from the guy that had loaned me his favorite Slayer record the week prior with no such warning. He then put his copy of *The Downward Spiral* in my hands and said, "Wait to listen to this until you've had the worst [bleep] in your life. I remember in a while and just want to be pissed off and wallowing in depression." This recommendation like that, you know which one I played first, right? This was in the early '90s when Trent Reznor and his band had plenty of shock value and thrash or metal was a marginal style of music. An earlier memory of Industrial (big "I") music was about a year before being introduced to Nine Inch Nails, listening to what I now realize was Ministry at a house party in college.

Watching **Metal Machine Music: Nine Inch Nails and the Industrial Uprising** realize that while Industrial was largely an after-the-fact, radioplay brand like so many others, it spoke loudly to more than just college kids experimenting in their first years away from home. The raw, emotional qualities of this music, combined with the reckless abandon its lyrics displayed in relation to each other and their instruments, spoke to any disaffected individual. Much like the U.K. in the late '70s, where Industrials charts its way to the top, the US was primed by the late '80s for a shot in the arm. **Metal Machine Music** shows how a recession and out-of-touch governments in both the UK and the US turned happy-go-lucky bands like Depeche Mode into dark bards singing from behind a cloud of synthesizer machines. The documentary goes back to Genesis P. Orridge and Throbbing Gristle, the godfather of Industrial across the pond from Trent Reznor, and pre-dating him by many years. Throbbing Gristle, like Nine Inch Nails, held the belief that music was just a sound, hence anything that made sound made music, hence musicians were just people who knew how to produce sound.

**Metal Machine Music** labors a bit too much over the mechanics of how artists like Reznor created their music, and includes very few instances of Reznor even talking about his music. Chris Vrenna and other Nine Inch Nails collaborators get screen-time, and provide some insight on Reznor's creative process and the experience of rising so rapidly in the early '90s as Industrial was coming to the fore. During the two-hour feature, there is a lot of time spent on many people analyzing the importance of songs and albums, compared to the amount of time spent on footage and music being played. **Metal Machine Music** is a great documentary



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that has lived and breathed albums like *Pretty Hate Machine*, *Broken*, *The Down* and *The Fragile*. You'll come away with a deeper understanding of the important records and how they fit into the broader context of Industrial, Metal, Thrash Grunge. Additional special features drill deeper into the early years of Industrial with Throbbing Gristle, so pre-Gen Xers can get their fill of how Brit music went hard '70s. What you won't get from **Metal Machine Music** is extended concert or club personal insights from Reznor. It's a shame this piece wasn't wrapped in, since the feature focuses on Reznor's rise to power and prominence. As is mentioned in **Metal Machine Music**, Reznor has long been a master of controlling his image, and we see this by the disclaimer on the DVD package - "This DVD is not authorised by Trent Reznor. Trent didn't see this documentary as an integral part of that plan. Even so, it's a boon for fans and a decent documentary.

-Fridtjof, GameVortex Communications AKA M

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