



Metal Machine Music: Nine Inch Nails and the Industrial Uprising (DVD)
by **Laura Ferreiro**

There are a couple of ways to look at this documentary: an informative look at Nine Inch Nails' place in the evolution of industrial music and rock history; or an incomplete project due to the absence of Nine Inch Nails' mastermind Trent Reznor. *Metal Machine Music* is chock full of interviews with knowledgeable music journalists, former members of Nine Inch Nails and even one of the main founders of industrial music, but it doesn't quite make up for the fact that Reznor is nowhere to be found. That said, several well-informed sources explain the band's evolution and how they were able to bring industrial music into the mainstream and morph it into something dark and edgy yet accessible through the use of pop hooks.

Metal Machine Music, which was named after Lou Reed's "anti-establishment" 1975 album of the same name, begins with a look at the history of industrial music, shaped by Cabaret Voltaire, Skinny Puppy, Ministry and Throbbing Gristle, whose singer Genesis P-Orridge explains the seeds of industrial music sewn by his highly influential band. New wave icons Depeche Mode even make their way into the mix, and are credited with preceding Nine Inch Nails in successfully bringing dark sounds into pop music.



Former Nine Inch Nails members Chris Vrenna and Richard Patrick offer their perspectives on the band's significance as well as how Reznor's drug addiction and subsequent recovery affected

the band. There's also plenty of archival footage of Reznor here, and it may be enough to get a fair sense of the band's history, live-performance style and intensity, but this doesn't make up for the fact that Reznor didn't directly contribute to this documentary at all. No explanation is given as to why this is -- it could be in keeping with his mysterious interview-averse persona, or it could be that the film didn't earn his stamp of approval. In any case, it does make one wonder. Even without Trent, *Metal Machine Music* is something for Nine Inch Nails fans to get excited about. It offers valuable insights into one of the most influential bands of the 1990s that continues to be a boundary-breaking, musical force to be reckoned with today. But you can bet they'll be even more jazzed when Reznor himself enters the building.

As for the bonus features, they're very basic. The first, "The Genesis of Industrial Music," is nothing more than an extended interview with Genesis P-Orridge in which he expands on his discussion in the main feature. The second is the printed biographies of the film's contributors. Necessary? Perhaps. Dull and difficult to read? For sure.

Dolby Digital Stereo DTS Surround Sound.

The Video: 6/10
The Audio: 6/10
The Extras: 4/10
Overall: 6/10