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## The Blog

out now

tuesday, april 7, 2009

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

4/7/09

MVD Visual

*Metal Machine Music: Nine Inch Nails and the Industrial Uprising* plays like an A&E presentation of a music history midterm essay, complete with narration by a former attendee of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Thomas Arnold. The 136-minute documentary chronicles the history of Industrial music and Nine Inch Nails through a series of interviews with guys in black T-shirts and archival footage largely irrelevant to the topic being discussed. This sterily cheesy re-telling of the story of Industrial does, however, contain some surprisingly pleasant nuts and bolts, even if getting to them can be a bit like distilling Chinese cooking wine for "maximum drinkability."

The commentary, provided largely by *Metal Edge* and *Revolver* contributors, along with band historians, is actually far more insightful than would be expected. The best subjects, however, prove to be those who were on the front lines, including former Nine Inch Nails members Chris Vrenna and Richard Patrick, along with Chemlab mainman Jared Louche. The most satisfying portion of the documentary though is the footage likely drawn from old bootlegs, including performances of "Suck" and "Sin" from Nine Inch Nails' *Petty Hate Machine* tour and beautifully brutal footage of Ministry from when they were still relevant.

While the nearly hour-long *Behind the Music* style Industrial documentary is more impressive than it initially looks and the nearly two-hour-long Nine Inch Nails documentary encompassed in *Metal Machine Music* is more impressive than it initially looks, the two don't necessarily mesh as easily as the filmmakers assume. Although, if you're merely looking for a few good, digitized clips from your collection of VHS bootlegs or a select few words of wisdom, it may be worth a once-through... In case saving time is




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your thing, the most poignant moment of the whole film comes only seven minutes in, when Genesis P-Orridge, the God(like) genius behind all of this, eloquently sums up Industrial music: "Punks would say 'Learn three chords and form a band' and we'd say 'Why learn any chords?' As soon as you learn the chords you're surrendering to the status quo." *Izzy Cihak*

posted by izzy cihak at 2:31 am 

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