

## THE BLARG

THE SITE OF JUSTIN SHADY + WAYNE CHINSANG

# Quick DVD Review: "Metal Machine Music: Nine Inch Nails and the Industrial Uprising"

March 4, 2009 in [Blogs!](#) | Tags: "[Metal Machine Music: Nine Inch Nails and the Industrial Uprising](#)", [10050 Cielo Drive](#), [Cabaret Voltaire](#), [Chris Vrenna](#), [Depeche Mode](#), [Exotic Birds](#), [Halo](#), [Marilyn Manson](#), [Ministry](#), [NIN](#), [Nine Inch Nails](#), [Richard Patrick](#), [Sharon Tate murders](#), [Skinny Puppy](#), [Throbbing Gristle](#), [Trent Reznor](#)

I'm not a fan of Nine Inch Nails. No, when it comes to the music of Trent Reznor, I admittedly surpass that realm of fandom and instead find myself immersed completely in the cold and lonely waters of full-blown dorkdom.

I've seen Nails play live more than any other band (somewhere around eight to ten times), own most of the Halos (if you're a fellow nerd you know what that means), and am even willing to (GASP!) *pay* to own their music.

That's saying a lot considering I can get almost anything I want for free through either legitimate (i.e. review copies) or shady (i.e. theft) means.

So, as you may expect, I was *clearly* excited when I got this DVD in the mail. Soon after, however, a feeling of weariness washed over me when my eye caught the following sentence printed on the back of the case: "This DVD is not authorized by Trent Reznor."

Great. Another scattered and hastily thrown together compilation of grainy videos and shitty audio dubs of Reznor and the gang from the late eighties and early nineties, peppered with interviews of music historians who have never spent one second with any member of the band.

That had to be the case, right?

Wrong.

Amazingly, Reznor's lack of approval on this two and a half hour-long documentary doesn't keep it from being an extremely well done and thorough look into the birth of the industrial scene and how it eventually helped shape a kid from Ohio named Trent.

Instead of jumping right into the birth of Nails, the documentary spends a good amount of time setting up the time line of events that got us there. It starts with the creation of the sound itself in the early seventies with bands like Throbbing Gristle and Cabaret Voltaire. This segues into the eighties and the evolution of the sound as interpreted by bands like Depeche Mode, Skinny Puppy and Ministry.

And finally, it winds up in Cleveland, Ohio of all places, influencing Reznor who at the time was sporting

a near-Flock of Seagulls coife while playing keyboard for a synthpop band known as the Exotic Birds.

And then: Nine Inch Nails.

The documentary is well researched and far more extensive than I expected it to be. In fact, it even goes into the release of Reznor's last NIN offering, "The Slip," which was just released a little more than six months ago. Not bad for a documentary that I assumed would start with "Closer" and end with his soundtrack work for Oliver Stone and David Lynch.

Also contrary to what I expected, the people interviewed for the film truly know their shit. Sure, we're given standard band documentary interview fare (NIN biographer Tommy Udo, "Revolver" magazine writer Jon Wiederhorn, etc.), but we're also given in-depth one-on-ones with those who knew Reznor best in the beginning, including former NIN bandmates [Chris Vrenna](#) and Richard Patrick.

If anyone knows about the birth and rise of Nails, it's these guys.

For diehards, some of the information will be regurgitation, but that's somewhat to be expected when buying what is the video equivalent of a greatest hits album. I mean, sure, we already have all the tracks on the disc, but not in this order!

Occasionally, a video clip I wasn't familiar with would sneak in, including footage from this live performance of "Gave Up" that was filmed in the basement of the Sharon Tate murder house at 10050 Cielo Drive. Keep an eye out for an extremely young Marilyn Manson on guitar and backing vocals.

All of these elements come together to create a nice little NIN history book. Of course, *ideally*, Reznor would be involved in the creation of something like this. But until that day comes, this is a damn good placeholder on my DVD shelf.

Put my faith in God and my trust in you,

[-Shady](#)

---