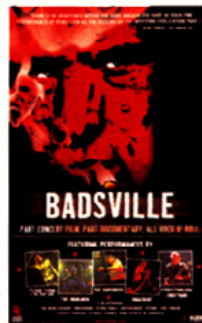


CINEMA DIABLO

BADSVILLE REVIEWS



CINEMA VERITÉ COMES TO L.A.'S CLUB SCENE

For his new rock 'n' roll documentary, "Badsville," P.J. Wolff spent 18 months filming in L.A.'s smokiest, sweatiest underground music sanctuaries, where would-be rock stars pour their hearts out onstage night after night—often to hordes of loyal followers—but few seem able to break into the mainstream.

"I knew these bands had some interesting tales to tell," says Wolff, whose raucous film showcases local bohemian stalwarts such as Extra Fancy, Motochrist, Texas Terri and the Stiff Ones, Bubble, Pigmy Love Circus, the Streetwalkin' Cheetahs and the Hangmen. The latter's front man, Bryan Small, speaks for many of his colorful peers when he likens his band's early days to VH-1's "Behind the Music," but without the limos and the big bucks to back it up."

A struggling musician himself, Wolff saw making "Badsville" (a mix of interviews and live footage a la Penelope Spheeris' "Decline of Western Civilization"), as a way to bypass the corporate gatekeepers and snag attention for his favorite bands. The result, for sale at Tower Video in Hollywood, opens a window on a volatile milieu where drug problems, stage mishaps, personality conflicts, unappealing day jobs and record deals gone awry are just part of the game.

Despite its cautionary moments, Wolff's exuberant valentine to L.A.'s demimonde die-hards celebrates a subculture where music may not always translate into a career, but often becomes a way of life. "If Joe rock 'n' roller in Idaho picks it up and becomes a fan of one these bands, that would make me happy," he says. "There's such talent here, and hopefully this will help it get some exposure."—LINA LECARO

14 LOS ANGELES TIMES MAGAZINE, November 25, 2001

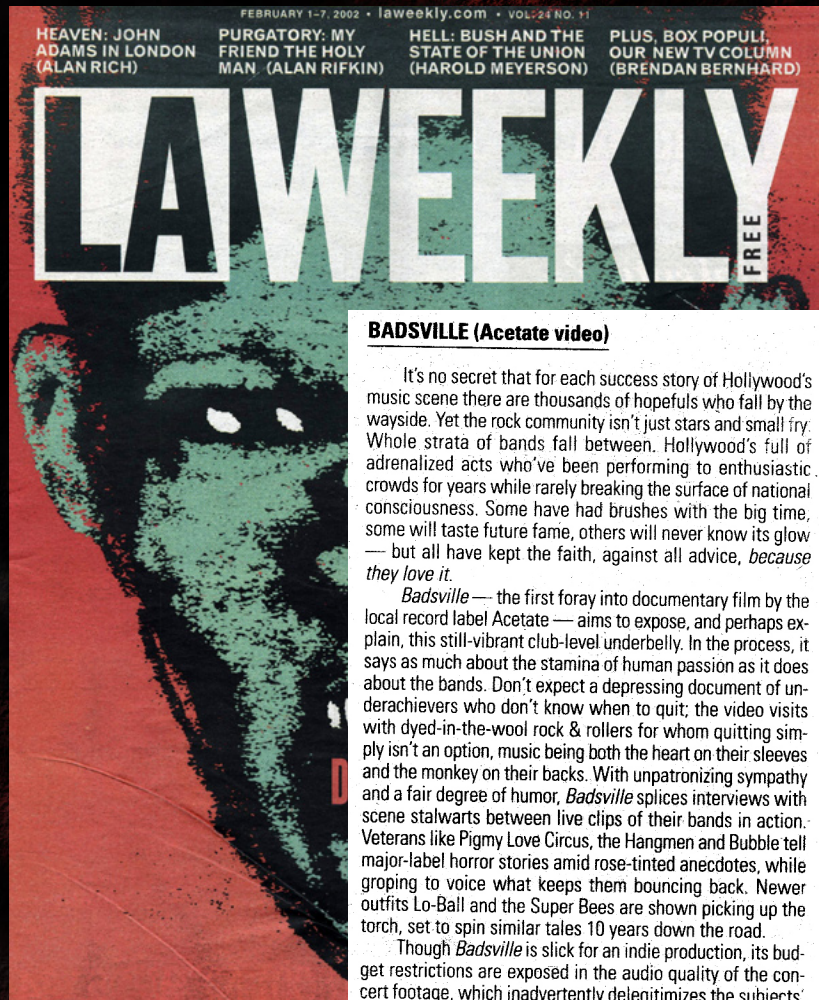
In Salt Lake, Mormonism and non-Mormon fans, like John Summers and Calvin Johnson, are bonded by friendship and efforts to change the culture. By David Wharton

BADSVILLE

PART CONCERT FILM, PART DOCUMENTARY, ALL ROCK 'N' ROLL.

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BADSVILLE (Acetate video)

It's no secret that for each success story of Hollywood's music scene there are thousands of hopefuls who fall by the wayside. Yet the rock community isn't just stars and small fry. Whole strata of bands fall between. Hollywood's full of adrenalized acts who've been performing to enthusiastic crowds for years while rarely breaking the surface of national consciousness. Some have had brushes with the big time, some will taste future fame, others will never know its glow — but all have kept the faith, against all advice, *because they love it.*

Badsville — the first foray into documentary film by the local record label Acetate — aims to expose, and perhaps explain, this still-vibrant club-level underbelly. In the process, it says as much about the stamina of human passion as it does about the bands. Don't expect a depressing document of underachievers who don't know when to quit; the video visits with dyed-in-the-wool rock & rollers for whom quitting simply isn't an option, music being both the heart on their sleeves and the monkey on their backs. With unpatronizing sympathy and a fair degree of humor, *Badsville* splices interviews with scene stalwarts between live clips of their bands in action. Veterans like Pigmy Love Circus, the Hangmen and Bubble tell major-label horror stories amid rose-tinted anecdotes, while groping to voice what keeps them bouncing back. Newer outfits Lo-Ball and the Super Bees are shown picking up the torch, set to spin similar tales 10 years down the road.

Though *Badsville* is slick for an indie production, its budget restrictions are exposed in the audio quality of the concert footage, which inadvertently delegitimizes the subjects' tireless self-belief. Small gripes aside, the video offers a warmly lighted window into a fascinating subculture, and a reminder that there's much joy in band life beneath the corporate radar. (Paul Rogers)

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REVIEWS

THE LATEST CD AND DVD REVIEWS

***Badsville* DVD**

By Edward "Ace" Annese, Contributor
Friday, November 30, 2001 @ 2:30 PM

One thing's for sure: Despite all the bullshit pronouncements by the mainstream media that Rock n' Roll is dead, (upstart hypemongers like The Strokes notwithstanding) it simply ain't true. This flick proves it, though critics and writers from such Ivory Tower publications like the NY Times, Spin or Rolling Stone probably aren't going to see this, which is too bad. This film is not about rap/rock, nu metal, hip-hop or candyass pop -- it's all about dirty, sweaty, stripped-down 4-on-the-floor R n' R, with no frills, baby!!! And it's live and direct from Hollywood!

The great thing about this flick is, not only does it document great bands (although San Francisco's American Heartbreak is notably missing) and great songs, with mesmerizing performances, but it also chronicles some of the funniest war stories about having been on major labels, then getting dropped unceremoniously, or in true R n' R scenarios -- like Extra Fancy's performing at The Playboy Mansion, or Dogs D'amour trashing an establishment in France, then getting busted by the Gendarmes. Classic!

Still, it's incredible performance sequences of bands like Texas Terri and the Stiff Ones, The Hangmen, Motochrist, Coyote Shivers, Man Scouts of America, and The Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, among others, that really drive this film. These shows embody the pure unbridled fury of Rock n' Roll for the fun of it!!! It's also a testimonial to the never-say-die spirit of these acts, who rock on, despite the long odds of ever getting another major-label deal, let alone becoming Rock Stars -- though it's evident that many would still love to live that life if it happened.

In short, *Badsville* is funny, sad, exhilarating, blistering and poignant. And that, kiddies, is what Rock n' Roll is all about. The title might read "*Badsville*," but it's All Good.

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BADSVILLE (DVD)

by Chris Parcellin
(2003-05-08)
2001, Unrated, 90 minutes, A Cinema Diablo Film

Los Angeles has long been a hotbed of rock'n'roll talent. In the mid-90s the *Dogme* Jim Morrison prowled the stages of the Whiskey A-Go-Go drunkenly spouting obscenities and cementing a place for himself, and his bandmates, in the history books. His bad craziness also helped to establish L.A. as a hot spot that great bands have converged on ever since hoping for that big record deal from the powers that be.

After the flame-out of another set of L.A. rockers, Guns N' Roses, the 1990s were a lean time for rock'n'roll, as alternative shooglers, hip hop and teeny bopper pop clones took the spotlight away from the bands who'd been grinding out loud, rude music in the Big Town.

Lame alterna-wings like Billy Corgan have been saying for years that rock'n'roll is a lost cause. But the new documentary, "Badsville," shows that while rock'n'roll has been left for dead by the music biz at large, there are still plenty of slamin' rock'n'roll bands out there in the bowels of L.A., doing damage in seedy dives—where people still gather to get loaded and crazy to the roar of loud guitars and pounding drums.

Among the bands featured are the Super Bees, who tear up the stage with the kind of fury that recalls the hellfire intensity of the legendary MC5. While the Newlydeads (led by Taine Downie, formerly of glam metal mainstays, Faster Pussycat) are more like a rocked-out, goth-ish industrial band.

Another band, Dragbeat, are interesting because they shot their own black-and-white video with a '60s Russ Meyer type of vibe including popo dancers and old-school rockin'. The Street Walkin' Cheetahs—whose name comes from an old Iggy & the Stooges song—are a high energy outfit who happen to be one of the better bands who are on a sort of retro punk trip. Speaking of which, Coyote Shivers is definitely out of the *gay, Pop* school of stage performers. But he looks more like another punk poet, Richard Hell. And the all-girl Lo-Ball play snappy pop punk.

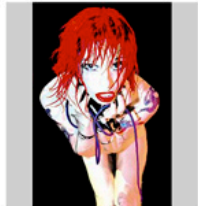
In between the musical performances, the various bandmembers discuss getting (and losing) major label deals. One of the most amusing performers is an outlying lady named Texas Terri. Her band, the Stiff Ones, come across as a more metallic version of our friends the Stooges. And with her candy-apple colored hair, Terri is a real attention getter. After a topless photo shoot—where she discreetly covers her nipples with duct tape—like the late, great Wendy O. Williams used to—she says "I don't like when people grab my tits. That bugs me." And who can blame her? A gal has to draw the line somewhere. As it turns out, her self-assessed stage persona is indeed a lot of fun.

Another highlight of the film is the burly, wild-eyed *bad singer* of Pygmy Love Cicca singing "I'm the King of L.A., I Killed Aid Rose Today". One look at this guy and you might find yourself wondering if it's true. And with the way Rose's career has gone—wishing it was. But the funniest dude in "Badsville" is the drummer for the British band Dogs D'Amour. With his Spinal Tap-ish recollections of hotel room demolitions and onstage mishaps.

Most of the musicians in this documentary are clearly way, way beyond their teenage years. When asked why they keep playing when they never made it, the musicians are pretty much as a loss for an answer. And Shane Pedersen of Bubble offers up the tough reality that the disadvantages of the lifestyle become apparent "when you see a doctor and he says you should be in the hospital, and they won't let you in because you don't have health insurance."

The main thing that comes through about the bands in "Badsville" is that they are out there rockin' because they love to do it. And in an age of horrendous bands like Limp Bizkit and Kid Rock, it's nice to see something genuine for a change. "Badsville" captures the spirit of rock'n'roll in its most primal form—and at its best, offers up a kind of transcendence that's lacking in the product being ground out by the mainstream music business hacks.

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DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE DARK

by Chris Parcellin
(2003-05-13)

If you think the days of bad-assed [punk rock](#) and garage rock are dead and gone, you've got a big surprise awaiting you, Junior. Acts like Texas Terri and the Stiff Ones, the Super Bees and Dragbeat—to name but a few—are burning up the clubs playing with guts, grit and balls.



The specific club scene we're referring to here is in Los Angeles, where these bands and their peers have ignored the corporate slush that passes for "cutting edge" rock'n'roll these days and instead choose to hammer out the kind of three-chord slammer that make Joey Ramone and Stiv Bators smile in approval in that big CBGBs in the sky.

Dragbeat bassist PJ Wolff decided to document the raucous noise and electrifying stage presence of several LA bands, including his own, and the result is his highly-entertaining film "Badsville." Wolff not only captures the catharsis of high energy punk, he also provides an unflinching look at the tough times various veteran [band members](#) have lived through as they pursued the punk lifestyle.

Wolff is already hard at work on "Badsville 2" and his narrative feature debut "George & Ora", but we got to speak to him about the film that started it all.

Get the interview in part two of [DONT BE AFRAID OF THE DARK](#)>>>

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BADSVILLE

The blank stare on The Hangmen frontman Bryan Small's tongue-tied face when asked why he still plays in a rock band is worth the price of admission alone for *Badsville*, an independent film documenting the Los Angeles rock scene.

This VHS/DVD release—written, produced, edited and directed by P.J. Wolff and co-produced by Rick Ballard of L.A. band Dragbeat—intersperses concert footage from bands like The Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Motochrist, Man Scouts of America (the only non-L.A.-based band shown), Texas Terri and the Stiff Ones among others with interviews of scene veterans and bizarre outtakes from fringe characters.

A realistic snapshot of the small triumphs and more-often huge pitfalls that follow when a musician devotes his life to rock 'n roll, *Badsville* gives the viewer a true sense of the thriving L.A. music scene. (Acetate Records/BRI Video, 2020 Broadway, 2nd Fl., Santa Monica, CA 90404)

—Joe Kirschen

RAZORCAKE

fanzine * webzine



"Music was always somethin' that kinda bonded the freaks," so sayeth one of the booze-soaked participants in this sonically spectacular and visually stunning shockumentary straight from the sleazy rock'n'roll underbelly of Los Angeles. It's a sick'n'twisted tale of the new L.A. musical underground... a "Decline Of The Western Civilization" for the 21st Century... good trashy dirty fun for the eyes, ears, and soul!

The fast-paced imagery is as frenetic and crazed as the music itself... intermittent interview segments with various drug-addled musicians are cohesively spliced together between stellar live footage of **The Superbees** (raucously belligerent New York Dolls-like brashness), **The Newlydeads** (dark'n'decadent gothic-tinged rage), **Texas Terri & The Stiff Ones** (dangerously psychotic Stooges-influenced musical mayhem), **Throwrag** (demonically electrifying hillbilly hellcat hedonism), **Dragbeat** (sensuously smokin' and thunderously trashed R&B swagger), **Extra Fancy** (evil industrialized inner-city psychedelia), **Streetwalkin' Cheetahs** (balls-out alleyway-stumblin' rock'n'roll unruliness), **Motochrist** (loud'n'lively leather-clad sonic surliness), **Pigmy Love Circus** (rootin'-tootin' truck-drivin' Motorhead-style aural rebellion), **The Hangmen** (poetic white-trash trailerpark purveyors of musical sleaze), **Coyote Shivers** (a monstrous amphetamine-ravaged Lou Reed clone), **Lo-Ball** (sexy, sultry, and sonically lascivious... goodtime girlgroup zaniness galore!), **Bubble** (crunchy brick-heavy hardrock razzmatazz ala Courtney Love frontin' The Who), and **Man Scouts Of America** (dark vampiric metal-laden fury). And every one of 'em appears to be an alcoholic, a drug addict, a sexual deviant, or damn near criminally insane... "a rockstar cliché without being the rockstar", as the behind-the-camera interviewer knowingly states at one point during a hilariously engaging Q&A session with one of the manic fuzzy-eyed musicians.

"**Badsville**" vividly paints a wildly colorful picture of rock'n'roll rebelliousness born out of a garbage can in the rat-infested back-alleys of the City of Lost Angels... it's a sweaty, sordid, vomit-soaked rollercoaster ride of a story that includes all of the name-dropping, label-hopping, vein-popping madness expected from the bad boys and naughty girls who aurally rage and devilishly strut their stuff throughout all hours of the night. Damn straight, this is a sinfully delicious cinematic marvel from beginning to end... just what a smalltown Texas boy like me needs to rev-up the ol' VCR! - Roger Moser, Jr. (Acetate Records, 2020 Broadway, 2nd Floor, Santa Monica, CA 90404 and www.acetate.com)

CINEMA DIABLO

BADSVILLE REVIEWS

Badsville

Prebook 4/23/02; Street 5/14/02
 MVD, Music/Documentary, \$14.95; VHS, \$19.95
 DVD, NR, 84 min.

The following review refers to the DVD version of the title.



Badsville is the type of documentary musicians like to see, though anyone into hard rocking will turn this one up and dance. It features more than a dozen raw performances from barely known Los Angeles bands, most of which have spent plenty of years in the music business.

The best thing about *Badsville*, besides the music, is that its featured artists, the most recognizable being Coyote Shivers (Empire Records), are not famous and not part of any of today's "scenes." In fact, most were part of music scenes that have already come and gone, and the artists now are just making music for pure enjoyment (although a little money would help, too). Unlike other documentaries about rock 'n' roll, which often focus on one or two major bands and then explore the peripheral groups from their time period or area, *Badsville* takes a look at real working musicians, the ones who get up everyday without a paycheck or record deal, but who still manage to draw a crowd — like the ma-



PART CONCERT FILM, PART DOCUMENTARY, ALL ROCK 'N' ROLL.

majority of American bands.

The performances, shot almost entirely in small Los Angeles clubs, capture the seedy intensity of a night in Hollywood, complete with its raw force and its grating aggression. The bands show no mercy; they came to do what they do best: to play, to scream and to wail. Between their raging numbers, the documentary offers a little one-on-one interview time with a few of the musicians, showing them to be all different types of people, from wild to tame, each still living for the dream of Los Angeles rock 'n' roll.

SELLING POINTS: Musicians, especially those familiar with the Los Angeles music world, will love this film. It holds the same allure as any scratchy, rough and raucous punk rock album in your local independent record store. For some, it is a gem waiting to be uncovered and spun.

— Jarad Krywicki