

From The Back Of The Room

Synopsis:

In the early 1980s, American hardcore punk began to take shape in Washington, DC. This subculture blossomed in the United States, with bands like Minor Threat at the helm. Women, however, did not gain much visibility in this community until the 1990s, when Bikini Kill and their contemporaries spawned the riot grrrl movement.

Although Bikini Kill and riot grrrl made undeniably important contributions to underground music and culture, their peers and predecessors are often forgotten, both by music fans and feminists. From the Back of the Room aims to remedy this, beginning in 1981.

Cynthia Connolly, Tribe 8, Chris Boarts-Larson of Slug and Lettuce, and others take the viewer through these early years, exploring the development of the role of women in the national music scene through venues like ABC No Rio, and 924 Gilman Street. Kathleen Hanna and Allison Wolfe discuss the rise of riot grrrl, and the movement's staying power in underground music is disputed by many of the women interviewed.

The film moves through the 1990s with interviews from Naked Aggression, Submission Hold, Look Back and Laugh, Sick Fix, and Detestation. Booking agents, zine authors, musicians, and artists are all featured, giving the film a well-rounded scope. Red Thread, Condenada and Bruise Violet bring the viewer into the present tense.

Although respect is given to the riot grrrl movement, the second half of the film focuses more specifically on the variety of issues that face women in underground music. Beauty ideals, sexuality, motherhood, race and sexual violence are all discussed. Hopes for the future, and advice for younger women close out this heartfelt portrait of women in music.

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Bios:



The Producer/Director: Amy Oden lived in New York until age 10, when her family moved to the DC metro region. In 1996, at age 15, she started attending local shows and getting involved in the D.I.Y. community. She got her bachelor's degree in Broadcast Journalism at the University of Maryland in 2004, and worked as a Producer at MHz Networks until 2011. She has toured nationally and internationally with bands since 2005, and is currently enrolled in George Washington University, pursuing a Masters Degree in Women's Studies.



The Co-Producer: Brian (bk) was born and raised outside Washington D.C. until the age of 19 when he moved and remained within the city limits. He has a B.A in Political Science and History and a Masters in Education. Growing up listening to punk and indie rock, he was introduced to hardcore and the DIY scene at 18. Around 2003 he began setting up shows in D.C and taking part in organizing conferences such as NCOR and Visions in Feminism as the first male organizer. Today, he continues to book shows as well as make his own art and music.



The Editor: James Branscome (Jim) is a Los Angeles-based filmmaker/videographer. Originally from the Baltimore area, James graduated from Towson University in 2003 with a degree in Electronic Media and Film where he directed three short films. All three films went on to be screened at various film festivals with his Film III project, "Plucked Daisy" winning the Towson Media Arts Festival. In 2004, along with fellow Towson alumni and long friends formed Bluetrane Productions. Under the Bluetrane banner, he directed and co-wrote ten short films with many of them again being screened at various film festivals. James has also worked as an editor for Digital Roadshow Productions, putting together DVD featurettes for such releases as "Caligula," "Xtro," and "Don't Answer the Phone." In 2009, James moved to Los Angeles to continue pursuing a career in the film industry. He has edited two short films and is currently working on a TV pilot called "Pumpkin Morgue: Paranormal Investigator," which is a mixture of dark comedy and parodying of paranormal reality TV.

Technical Specifications:

TRT: 105 minutes

Aspect Ratio: 4:3

Camera: Panasonic DVX 100, archival footage

Stock: color, DV

Languages: English

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Press

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum's Library and Archives
Official Selection of the 2011 Virginia Film Festival
Official Selection of the 2011 DC Reel Fest

Featured in:

Pitchfork
Maximum Rock 'N Roll
San Francisco Bay Guardian
Washington City Paper's Entertainment Picks
Pittsburgh City Paper
Worcester Telegram & Gazette
Jezebel
Where the Girls Go
Pop Culture Notebook

"...Debunk(s) the myth that every woman who plays punk music today is a direct descendant of riot grrrl"

- Washington City Paper

"An exhaustive, diverse, and thoughtful meditation on women in the punk community"

- Washington City Paper

"Engrossing... a lovely and important film about people who've fallen in love with music, and why they've chosen to pursue that path despite a seemingly endless array of obstacles"

- Worcester Telegram & Gazette

Electronic Press Kit and Clips

Available here: <http://www.fromthebackoftheroom.com/press.htm>