

1999 - Restored SMS brings band together

Written by Frisco Examiner

From: San Francisco Examiner, April 27, 1999

WHEN "Stop Making Sense" premiered 15 years ago at the 1984 San Francisco Film Festival, directed by a then-unknown Jonathan Demme ("Silence of the Lambs"), critics went gaga for the documentary - a concert film like no other before it. "Captivating and exhilarating," crowed Rolling Stone; "coolly iconoclastic," echoed the New York Times.

The film featured live concert footage by Talking Heads, one of the most influential bands of the late '70s and early '80s, with no filler: no voice-overs, no cut-aways to the audience or to backstage, no between-song patter. It was 100 percent music - hard-charging funk 'n' roll, done in the artsy/ironic Heads fashion. It had 'em literally dancing in the theater aisles.

Now set to be re-released for its 15th anniversary, spiffed up visually and remixed digitally with state-of-the-art Dolby technology, "Stop Making Sense" will be screened Tuesday night as part of the current film festival, and will open in Bay Area theaters May 28. But even more exciting: the four Heads, who broke up 10 years ago and who have been less than friendly since, came together this week to launch the re-release.

"Overall, I think (the film) holds up pretty well!" said David Byrne, the band's primary figure, at a Monday press conference at Dolby studios where he was flanked by his former band mates. The quirky, brilliant Byrne in the last decade has pioneered world music with his own record label, Luaka Bop, and delved into other art forms including photography and design.

Looking natty in a peach jacket - a far cry from the bizarre Big Suit made famous in the film - Byrne added: "There are very few moments where you say, "Oh, that was so '80s!" Or feel like you're taking a trip down memory lane."

Bass player Tina Weymouth - one of the few women to infiltrate rock bands in those days - agreed for the most part. "Oh, but those stockings I was wearing . . . "

1999 - Restored SMS brings band together

Written by Frisco Examiner

Her band mates laughed heartily, lending their interactions a cordial - if not fuzzy-warm - feeling. Weymouth is still married to drummer Chris Frantz, with whom she is in the band Tom Tom Club; they also have a family now. Guitarist/keyboardist Jerry Harrison has become, as Frantz put it, "a big-time producer," recording records for the likes of Live, Violent Femmes and the local buzz-band, Stroke 9. He's also become a local resident - living in the North Bay.

Harrison said making the film was as enjoyable as watching it. "Nobody's energy ever flagged."

The group neatly side-stepped questions such as whether they would play together again now that they've seen the film ("I haven't seen it yet!" quipped Harrison), and whether it took a lot of cajoling to get all four together again.

"We thought, why not come out and do our part?" said Weymouth amiably. All four Heads are expected to attend the Tuesday night screening, along with Demme. Will they be dancing in the aisles again?

"I don't know," said Byrne shyly, "But I can't wait to find out!"