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**WHAT WE DO IS SECRET** ★★★★★

by Eric Campos  
 (2007-06-26)  
 2007, Un-rated, 90 minutes  
[CREDITS](#)



In the works for over ten years, it was inevitable that word would hit the web about the Germs/Darby Crash movie, and it did...and that word wasn't always the most encouraging. Being that The Germs are regarded as the most important band to come out of the late seventies Los Angeles [punk rock](#) scene, old school punkers crossed their arms defiantly and prepared to poo-poo anything they heard about the movie. Finally they were supplied the ammo they had been dreaming about when it was announced that Shane West would be portraying Darby Crash in the biopic. Everyone balked at an actor best known for his work on "E.R." playing their punk rock God. You gotta understand, punk rockers can be very stubborn people. And thus began the major shit-talking. Years passed and due to several production delays it looked like the Germs movie would never come to be, but first time feature filmmaker Rodger Grossman believed in this story and he stuck to his guns in order to make sure it was told. After ten years of speculation and adversity, the Germs movie has arrived and "What We Do Is Secret" should be kept as anything but a secret.

Within the first few opening moments of "What We Do is Secret," [Shane West](#), stalking a tiny club stage as Darby Crash, whines, "Someone get me a beeeeeer," and with that, all doubt of West's ability to play this role is gone. There he is. Darby Crash is resurrected in all of his furious glory. West portrays the punk rocker during his legendary "five-year plan," which would see he and buddy George Ruthenberg (who would later become Pat Smear) forming a band made up of members who knew nothing about playing musical instruments. They would become The Germs and they would learn to play as they went, quickly carving their notoriety into the Los Angeles punk rock scene in the late seventies. The film chronicles the band's rise to fame, which would ultimately find them banned from every rock club in town due to their penchant for inciting riots at their own shows. "What We Do Is Secret" is loaded with plenty of violent live performances, featuring Shane West pulling off a flawless Darby Crash impersonation, smashing bottles over his head, cutting himself with the jagged shards and spraying his lyrics and blood all over the audience. If you've never seen The Germs play live, this is the next best thing and you're in for a helluva ride. But then a good deal of the film also focuses on the demise of The Germs and Darby's wind down of his five-year plan which leads him to commit suicide by self-administering an overdose of heroin on December 7, 1980, the day before John Lennon was killed. It's not all kicking and screaming punk rock fury – there's a surprisingly touching human drama here, as well.

I've already mentioned Shane West turning in a tits perfect performance as Darby Crash.. but the rest of the cast provides plenty of movie candy to chew on, as well – the rest of The Germs for example with Rick Gonzalez ("Roll Bounce") as Pat Smear, Bijou Phillips ("[Hostel: Part II](#)") as Lorna Doom and Noah Segan ("Brick") as the one and only Don Bolles. The rest of the scene is filled out with Lauren German ("[Hostel: Part II](#)") as Belina Carlisle, Sebastian Roche ("General Hospital") as Kickboy Face – Slash magazine editor and frontman for Catholic Discipline, Ozzy Ben as Captain Sensible and Christopher

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Boyd as Dave Vanian of The Damned, Ray Park (Darth Maul) as Masque founder Brendan Mullen, J.P. Manoux ("Knocked Up") as Rodney Bingenheimer and a surprise, but perfect, appearance from professional jackass Chris Pontius as one of punk rock's most feared men - Black Randy of Black Randy and the Metro Squad. These actors and many more make "What We Do Is Secret" an absolute blast to watch and they do an undeniably perfect job of recreating this notorious scene.

Attention to detail is another thing that goes a long way in sucking the viewer back into this long gone era. For instance, during the recreation of a Screemers show you can hear someone in background holloreing that they want to hear "122 Hours of Fear," not exactly the most well-known [song](#) on the planet, so when you notice stuff like that, you know that the filmmaker and his crew knew what they were doing and I don't think a Germs fan could ask for more of this biopic.

It's apparent that a lot of care, research and blood, sweat and tears went into this production. The road to completion must have been arduous. Good news is that all efforts have led to success. The Germs movie is finally here and it is a more than worthy tribute to one of punk rock's largest heroes.

So, all you naysayers, swallow some pride and go see the fuckin' movie already. You'll still be punk rock afterwards. I promise.

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