



## **PRESS RELEASE: PUNK BAND THE MOVIE**

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### **CAPTURE THE INTENSE FIRE, FURY AND ULTIMATE SELF-DESTRUCTION OF A 'PUNK BAND' IN THE RIVETING NEW DOCUMENTARY ABOUT CHICAGO'S VOICE OF ADDICTION**

Smack in the middle of "Punk Band," Brad Pontecore's riveting new documentary following the tour-driven whirlwind of misadventures and ultimate self-implosion of veteran Chicago punk trio Voice of Addiction, the veteran writer-director snags the ultimate moment of truth from frontman and bassist Ian Tomele.

"You've gotta have itchy feet to want to tour, because you're constantly on the move," says the multi-talented musician, who launched the group's original lineup in 2003 and is receiving massive critical acclaim for the group's latest album *The Lost Art of Empathy*. "You're literally in a different city every single day, and you have a load in time so you're always in a rush against the clock, setting alarms, getting up early sometimes. You gotta skip showers, breakfast, etc. to get there on time. You need a deep love for traveling because it's really rough. It's not for everybody. A lot of people cannot handle being on the road."

Pontecore, the head of Madness Maker Films, is an American Film Institute grad who made his first splash in the indie film world writing and producing the 2000 Sundance Film Festival Selection "My Brother," starring Adam Beach. He later worked in the advertising world, where at one point he teamed up with Miramax's marketing unit to create the tag line "America Was Born in the Streets" for Martin Scorsese's 10-time Oscar nominated film "Gangs of New York." Introduced to Tomele by "Punk Band" producer Mark Dannels in 2004, the director became a longtime friend of the singer, who had been suggesting a chronicle of life on the road with the band for years. Pontecore almost self-destructed himself following Tomele, guitarist Jakob Smith and drummer Vinnie Dinwiddie through 17 states, 34 cities, crummy weather and personality conflicts over the course of 4 and a half weeks in October 2016.

The craziest election season in American history made for the perfect backdrop for a politically and socially conscious band blazing onstage, its roaring energy and hard-hitting screamed lyrics viscerally overpowering crowds ranging from hundreds to single digits. "Two weeks in, I was

frustrated and ready to quit,” the director says. “We were in L.A. and I kept thinking I should fly back to Chicago and forget the whole thing. By two and a half weeks in, I realized, no, I can’t do anything BUT this, this is my life and all I want.”

Pontecore and his editor Jacob Schaer spent months editing some five terabytes of footage as Voice of Addiction rolled west pulling a trailer from town to town. Though he had directed numerous music videos in the past, including clips for Chicago based murder metal band Macabre, his aim was to create “not a long band video but a road movie in the classic Hollywood style.” Interspersed among the fiery performance clips are deeply revelatory moments by each band member, lots of highway footage, a clever clip from the 50’s sharing the virtue of tollways (perhaps to contrast America’s innocence then with today’s loss thereof) and, yes, the tense moments and fights which eventually led to Tomele firing Dinwiddie and Smith quitting. On the upside, Pontecore, like Tomele, had his faith in humanity restored via the kindness of strangers and supporters, who opened their homes for everyone to crash at on many nights.

“The experience was grueling at times, but it made me happy to have a great time with every performance,” Pontecore adds, “seeing the sweat pouring from Ian’s brow, all the intensity he puts into this – even when there weren’t a lot of people there. The guy has an incredible work ethic. They played the same for a single fan as they would do for five billion people. Besides his incredible songs, I find him to be a very empathetic guy, who always takes in people when they are in Chicago and need a place to stay. After a while, I felt like being around Voice of Addiction was like participating in a family – sometimes dysfunctional but always a place where you feel at home.”

“Punk Band” will be available July 13 on Vimeo and the Madness Maker Films website, with major distribution on tap for later. Pontecore and Tomele will host a release party for the film August 17 at the Beat Kitchen in Chicago. After the screening, there will be performances by V.o.A. and other bands featured on the soundtrack, a “who’s who” of Chicago punk bands, including 88 Fingers Louie, Pegboy, Local H and Naked Raygun.

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