

## 3/4's of Talking Heads Waiting on a Call

Rare Live Footage Leaves Drummer Chris Frantz Thinking, 'Whose Idea Was It to Stop This Band Anyway?'



Watching the new Talking Heads DVD "Chronology" -- a set of live and mostly early-career performance footage -- made drummer Chris Frantz feel "tons of feelings, both positive and kind of sad, but mostly positive." And, he adds, "It also makes me think, like, whose idea was it to stop this band anyway?"

That issue, of course, has been well-chronicled, and Frantz says he hasn't broached any reunion talk with frontman David Byrne "since shortly after the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame thing (in 2002), when I said, 'This is so much fun, why don't we continue with this a little bit?' I was kind of met with, shall we say, a lot of resistance, and sometimes it's best to leave well enough alone. We all hope David will one day wake up and say, 'Boy, I should call Chris and Tina (Weymouth, Frantz's wife) and Jerry (Harrison)...' That's the only way anything will happen."

Until then, "Chronology" gives fans a chance to dip into vintage Talking Heads performances, including clips from shows from 1975 and 1976 at New York venues such as CBGB, The Kitchen and the Entermedia Theatre -- mostly shot by New York University film students -- broadcast appearances on "Saturday Night Live," "American Bandstand," "Late Night with David Letterman" and Britain's "Old Grey Whistle Test," and stops at the US Festival in California and the Montreux Festival in Switzerland. There's also a rendition of "Life During Wartime" from the group's Rock Hall induction, as well as a complete 1979 "South Bank Show" profile from Britain, a Byrne interview from 1978, a montage of Byrne song introductions at The Kitchen in 1976 and new audio commentary by all four band members.

"It's funny, because even though we were visual artists, I don't think we thought in terms of our music visually, so there's really not a lot of (footage) around," says Weymouth. "We didn't have any cameras or anything in those days. We didn't really hear ourselves or see ourselves. So we're happy just having anything at all."

Frantz adds that watching the group perform early on "you can see we were just flying by the seat of our pants, doing our absolute best to remain cool. We were trying to kind of be a rock 'n' roll band although we were very consciously avoiding the sort of traditional trappings of what a rock band should sound like and look like. We were trying to be interesting and also have some fun with it -- although if you look at the very early stuff, it doesn't look like we're having fun. But we were."

Weymouth does say, however, that watching herself more than three decades later showed that "I should have been standing up straighter. My mother was right."

Frantz and Weymouth, meanwhile, are preparing to release some new music from the Tom Tom Club, the group they formed in 1981 during a period of Talking Heads inactivity. Frantz says a five-song EP -- which will include a remake of "Love Tape" by the Spanish electronica group the Pinker Tones, which was recorded for a tribute album for that band -- should be out soon, most likely on digital and vinyl formats. "It's been very exciting," Frantz says. "We recorded it with the touring band we have, and it sounds really great." He and Weymouth are also trying to lineup a guest appearance but decline to identify who it is. Tom Tom Club is also hoping to tour starting in the spring.

"We thought of Tom Tom Club as a studio dance (music) band, but instead it's kind of replaced what Talking Heads was for us," Weymouth says. "It's the band that goes out and tours now. It's wonderful and it's crazy because we're with a group of people that actually love being together and miss each other when they're not together, which is an amazing, remarkable dynamic and chemistry. It's so... I can be as bad as anything and they'll totally make up for any flaws. It's really a beautiful thing."