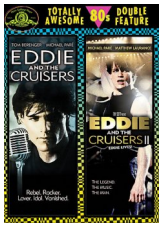


# Eddie and the Cruisers



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*Eddie and the Cruisers* is the story of a fictional band from the early '60s, their rise to fame and the death of their leader and chief wordsmith, Eddie Wilson. The story itself seems to be inspired by two real life events; the death of Doors lead singer Jim Morrison and the sudden decision by Brian Wilson of The Beach Boys to shelve the band's album *Smile*. Like singer Jim Morrison, Eddie Wilson is a master in putting words and music together in ways that convey feeling while still containing the drive and energy to make a great song. Like Brian Wilson, Eddie is forward thinking in his writing style and wants to produce a piece that is not simply rock and roll, but something that will be remembered for all time even if it is vastly different than anything he has done before.

Just as Brian Wilson found himself battling for his vision with both The Beach Boys and their studio, Eddie finds himself at odds with both his band and his record company. In frustration he takes the master tapes, gets in his car and drives off a bridge and into the water; his body and the tapes were never recovered. I'm not spoiling anything by revealing his death. The story is told in a series of flashbacks as a newswoman puts together a piece about Eddie, his death and the now legendary lost album. As she interviews the band and begins putting together the pieces events take place that seem to hint that maybe the lost tapes are not really lost.

The film is enjoyable. It accurately portrays the dynamics of a band finding its sound, the inner relationships in the band, and the pressures of success. The part of Eddie is played by Michael Paré. Eddie's emotion and drive are well demonstrated and his stage presence was so real that I was surprised when I found out that he was not singing his own vocal parts. The music for the movie was performed by John Cafferty and the Beaver Brown Band, and I personally thought it was some of the best rock music I've heard in a long time. There are really two stories in this film: the story of the Eddie Wilson and his death and the story of the band, past and present. The film moves smoothly between this past and present and back again. There are no really startling revelations in the film just a desire when it is all finished to hear the lost Eddie and the Cruiser's tapes of the album "A Season in Hell." Sadly we only get a couple of excerpts.

Posted by Keith C. on July 23, 2014

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