

S/HE IS STILL HER/E

The Official Genesis P-Orridge Documentary

A FILM BY DAVID CHARLES RODRIGUES

98 min. | USA | 2024

OFFICIAL SELECTION

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Logline

Genesis P-Orridge — pioneering musician, transgressive artist, spiritual explorer and gender revolutionary — lived their art to the extreme. In her last act on Earth, P-Orridge decides to bare it all.

Synopsis

Genesis P-Orridge lived their art to the extreme. A pioneering musician, avant-garde artist, spiritual explorer and gender revolutionary, Genesis has been featured in films and videos, but never the full story... never this intimate... until now. In this authorized but raw and personal documentary, award-winning director David Charles Rodrigues (GAY CHORUS DEEP SOUTH) documents the final year of P-Orridge's existence as they grapple with mortality and, in the process, reveal the many sacrifices and ultimate payoffs of a life that transcended boundaries. Featuring William Burroughs, Brion Gyson, Timothy Leary, Alice Genese (Psychic TV), David J (Bauhaus/Love and Rockets), Nepalese monks, African witch doctors, and a special cameo by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, plus never-before-seen archival treasures, including performances from Throbbing Gristle and Psychic TV.

About Genesis P-Orridge

Genesis P-Orridge's life and career were marked by a series of provocative projects and controversies that pushed the boundaries of art and identity. P-Orridge first gained prominence as a founding member of the experimental music group Throbbing Gristle in the mid-1970s. Throbbing Gristle was at the forefront of the industrial music movement, utilizing avant-garde techniques, electronic sounds, and provocative themes. The band's confrontational performances and controversial subject matter challenged societal norms and influenced a generation of artists.

After Throbbing Gristle disbanded in 1981, P-Orridge formed Psychic TV, an influential experimental music and multimedia collective that embraced elements of psychedelia, punk, and industrial music. Psychic TV's output encompassed music, visual art, performance, and occult themes, often blurring the boundaries between these disciplines. P-Orridge's exploration of spirituality, gender identity, and mysticism became central themes in their work. In addition to their musical endeavors, Genesis P-Orridge was a prolific visual artist, creating collage, sculpture, and mixed-media installations that reflected their interest in chaos magic, body modification, and alternative spirituality. One of the most notable projects was the Pandrogyny project with their partner Lady

Jaye Breyer P-Orridge, whom they married in 1995. The Pandrogyné project aimed to create a single, unified entity through the fusion of their identities, blurring the lines between male and female, self and other. This radical exploration of gender identity and the fluidity of self challenged societal norms and inspired discussions about the nature of identity and the limits of the body. Their art often challenged conventional notions of beauty and identity, pushing boundaries and exploring the intersections of the physical and spiritual realms.

Throughout their career, P-Orridge remained a controversial figure, unapologetically pushing the limits of acceptability in both their art and personal life. Their commitment to radical self-expression and transgressive creativity made them a revered figure in underground culture. Genesis P-Orridge passed away on March 14, 2020, leaving behind a rich and diverse legacy that continues to inspire artists across disciplines. Their impact on music, art, and culture remains profound, cementing their status as a true visionary and iconoclast.

Further reading:

New Yorker Magazine, 2020:

<https://www.newyorker.com/culture/postscript/industrial-music-for-industrial-people-the-singular-legacy-of-genesis-p-orridge>

New York Times, 2018:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/09/arts/music/genesis-p-orridge-throbbing-gristle.html?searchResultPosition=3>

New York Times, 2022:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/21/arts/design/genesis-p-orridge-artist-occult-transgender.html>

Director's Statement

A few months before meeting her, Genesis came to me in a dream. She put the palms of her hands over mine and said "darling I am transferring all of my knowledge to you, right now." Despite being a longtime fan of her work and, most importantly, her ideas, I tried my best not to see it as an omen to make a film about her. However, in the next few weeks, she kept showing up in my life in mysterious ways, until our fateful encounter at her home — we were supposed to meet for 45 minutes and it turned into a 12-hour cosmic information download. That same day, I learned she had less than a year to live due to terminal leukemia and also that her mentor Brion Gyson (William Burroughs' creative partner) once said "wisdom can only be passed through the touching of hands." I honestly didn't know who Brion was, but in that moment I knew this was a now or never situation and I saw the entire film unspool in my mind. I spent the next 12 months filming with her, drinking cran-grape vodkas (her favorite drink), and documenting some of the greatest concepts about our human existence I had ever heard. And then with the help of the Genesis estate (who gave us unlimited access to the archives) and our insanely talented editor Dillon Petrillo we were able to cut up Genesis' many life-times into one story.

To me, the film is the ultimate transference of knowledge from one of the most uncompromising artists of our times to everyone who watches it. Genesis lived for their art and lived to bring some pretty crucial and timely messages to the world. A few of them strike a deep chord with me: That our mission as creatives is to short circuit control, so we can help people see the world through multiple lenses and not just one. That humans have an untapped superpower where we can wake every morning and choose to become anything and anyone we want. And, finally, that unconditional love is accessed through loving boundlessly, beyond gender and even the limitations of being alive, or "trapped in our bodies," as Gen says.

One unexpected discovery I made in the process was how much of a loving parent Gen was and how well he raised his children. Filming with his daughters opened up a whole new perspective of who she was, a layer that not many people get to experience, definitely never on film like this before. I love that it reinvents the narrative of the uncompromising artist — one can live to the extreme, but still have a solid foundation and values.

At the end of the day, my hope is that this film can inspire people to live their own truth and create their own reality, whatever that may be.

— David Charles Rodrigues

The Filmmakers

David Charles Rodrigues (Writer/Director/Producer)

David is an award-winning Brazilian filmmaker and Sundance Fellow based in Los Angeles. David started as a graphic novel writer in Brazil and now focuses on films that leverage the power of entertainment and art to deliver vitally human, life-changing messages to audiences around the world.

David's feature doc GAY CHORUS DEEP SOUTH, executive produced by Sheila Nevins and distributed by MTV Documentary Films, won the Tribeca 2019 Audience Award for Best Documentary and was selected by Rotten Tomatoes as one of the Top 20 LGBTQ Films of all time. It is in the permanent collection of the Academy Museum. In 2022, he released the Netflix original series NEYMAR: THE PERFECT CHAOS. Selected as one of *Esquire's* Top Ten documentaries of 2022, it was one of the most watched docuseries globally on Netflix, making it to the streamer's Top Ten in over 50 countries with 70 million viewers in the first 28 days. The series is executive produced by LeBron James and Maverick Carter.

He is set to release the OMNIVORE series, featuring NOMA Chef René Redzepi, on Apple TV later in 2024.

Bud Johnston (Producer)

Bud Johnston is an award-winning producer of commercials and films whose career spans 20+ years working with some of the world's biggest brands and production studios. Bud is the producer of GAY CHORUS DEEP SOUTH, purchased by Sheila Nevins (MTV Documentary Films) as their 2019 Awards contender. The film won over 35 awards in festivals worldwide, including The Tribeca 2019 Audience Award Winner for Best Documentary. Currently, Bud is co-producing his third feature documentary with A24/Sandbox films, which is slated for premiere in early 2025.

Dillon Petrillo (Writer/Editor)

Dillon Petrillo is a lifelong multimedia artist with over 20 years of editing experience. He has helped build brands, promote musical artists and tell compelling stories (a prerequisite for all of his projects). Dillon lives in Los Angeles, CA. S/HE Is STILL HER/E is his first documentary feature.

Main Credits

Directed by
David Charles Rodrigues

Written by
Dillon Petrillo and David Charles Rodrigues

Edited by
Dillon Petrillo

Produced by
David Charles Rodrigues and Bud Johnston

Cinematography by
Adam Hobbs and Freddie Whitman

Original Score by
Scarlet Newman-Thomas and Ryan Lallier

Music by
Throbbing Gristle and Psychic TV

Co-Producers
Jai Love and Brittany Freece

Executive Producers
Genesse P-Orridge
Laura Jane Grace
David Koh
Ryan Martin
Dillon Petrillo
Caresse P-Orridge

Co-Executive Producer
Chloe Teo

Special thanks to The Estate of Genesis P-Orridge

Genesis Portrait by
Clarity Haynes

Interviewees/Cast

Genesis P-Orridge

Caresse P-Orridge

Genese P-Orridge

Alice Genese

Paul "Bee" Hampshire

David J Haskins

Clarity Haynes

Benjamin Tischer