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Duane Allman & The Rise Of The Allman Brothers Band (2013/Chrome Dreams/MVD DVD)

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- > The Gangster (2012/aka Antapal/Magnolia/Magnet Blu-ray)

**Aerosmith: Rock For The Rising Sun** (2011 Concert/Eagle Blu-ray)/**Filly Brown** (2012/Gaiam Vivendi DVD)/**Song Of The South: Duane Allman & The Rise Of The Allman Brothers Band** (2013/Chrome Dreams/MVD DVD)

Picture: B-/C/C+ Sound: B-/C/C+ Extras: C/C+/C Main Programs: C/C+/B

Now for some recent music-oriented releases...



Though their early HD-shot Unplugged performance for MTV remains in mothballs, we finally get to see **Aerosmith: Rock For The Rising Sun** (2011), a concert in Japan meant to raise immediate funds for the mega-disaster that is the massive flooding that also caused the Fukushima Nuclear Plant disaster. The 17-song show is competent, forceful, forward, deliberate and lacking in any energy beyond that, is joyless and even in the two bonus song performances, stiffly dull.

The band has been played out for years, as this review of their **Honkin' On Bobo** album of more than a few years ago reminds us:

<http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/1376/Aerosmith+-+Honkin%27+On+Bobo>

However, I give them points for being charitable, but even the tired likes of Bon Jovi have been often charitable, but that does not make their music that good either. In the 1970s, Aerosmith was a great, important Rock band, but since their plastic, mechanical comeback (being clean of drugs cleaned them of their better Rock Music facilities), they have been very formulaic, cynical and their music for the likes of **Armageddon** and bizarre CGI appearance in **Polar Express** are among the nadirs of said comeback.

Fans may enjoy this one, but I was surprised how flat the long 105 minutes really were here. Oddly, Steven Tyler still has the voice, but worse than Rod Stewart and almost as bad as Peter Cetera, does not know what to do with it or really cares to push it all the way.

Switching to Rap for a moment, Youssef Delara and Michael D. Olmos have co-directed **Filly Brown** (2012), a drama about a young lady (Gina Rodriguez) whose life is in a bad way with a mother (the late Jenni Rivera) in prison, a younger sister to look after with her struggling father (Lou Diamond Phillips) and other urban prejudices and entanglements in Los Angeles and surrounds areas. She has a knack for words and could be a major Rap Music artist, but can she get a record made without selling out or being used up?

Though some of the moments are familiar, what sets this apart from most urban dramas is its cast, with good performances all around (is Phillips really this old? Say it isn't so!) and Edward James Olmos (who also co-produces) in another good supporting turn. Also, we get a female urban

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discourse often that rings true and is all too rare in the genre, music or drama-wise. I have a feeling this is one that will be discussed years from now. Maybe having two directors caused this one to be uneven, but that is the only other major complain in an otherwise ambitious and interesting production.

Extras include feature length audio commentary tracks by the Directors, Music Commentary by the Music Producers, Reza Safinia & Gina Rodriguez and Extended & Deleted Scenes that includes the original opening to the film that I thought was far superior and far more cinematic, plus more footage of the late Miss Rivera.

Last and not least at all is **Song Of The South: Duane Allman & The Rise Of The Allman Brothers Band** (2013), yet another remarkable documentary from the Chrome Dreams production house in the U.K. talking about how the Country and Southern music that helped make Rock possible was ironically absent for many years in the national music discourse until the rise of The Allman Brothers and how Duane Allman, a great singer who happens to be one of the greatest guitarists of all time, made that possible in his all-too-short life.

Robert Christgau and a group of Allman friends and other music scholars tell the remarkable story in opinions, events and music on how it all happened and all the original music has been licensed as usual for two engrossing hours. This includes early recordings that failed to chart, the band that put him on the map finally coming together and his historic work with Eric Clapton on the legendary masterpiece **Layla** (the song and album) ensuring his legacy forever. Don't miss this one!

Extras include text on the contributors and two video interview clips: *Willie Perkins: Life Amongst The Brothers* and *Recording The Allmans: The Albert Brothers & Criteria Studios*.

For more music tied to the documentary, try these links:

**Gregg Allman – I'm No Angel – Live DVD**

<http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/11939/Color+Me+Obsessed:+A+Film+About>

**Derek & The Dominoes: Layla & Other Assorted Love Stories** Super Audio CD 5.1 (SA-CD, ultimate sonic digital edition of the album)

<http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/2327/Derek+&+The+Dominoes+-+Layla+&>

The 1080i 1.78 X 1 digital High Definition image on the **Aerosmith** Blu-ray may have some detail issues, color limits, slight noise and motion blur, but it is visually the most competent as expected as the only HD entry on the list. The anamorphically enhanced 1.78 X 1 image on **Filly** should be the next best, but despite a shoot that has some good editing and visual form, this transfer is just too soft for its own good and motion blur is a problem, but I bet a Blu-ray might correct some of these issues. That leaves the 1.33 X 1 on **Allman** looking better with some great classic film clips, stills, video and new interview tapings, which are edited together well and more seamlessly than most can do in the music documentary area,

The DTS-HD MA (Master Audio) 5.1 lossless mix on **Aerosmith** is also the best presentation among all the releases here sonically, but the soundfield is a little compressed and inconsistent, confirmed by the PCM 2.0 Stereo tracks, meaning it is an engineering/production issue. This is not the best I have heard the band either.

The lossy Dolby Digital 5.1 on **Filly Brown** has the same issues, but also some location audio is too low, the dialogue too much in the center channel and transfer just on the weak side, even noticed when the Hip Hop sound kicks in. Maybe a lossless mix on a Blu-ray would fare better, but until then, the lossy Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo on **Allman** is the second-best sonic presentation here, even when some sound is monophonic. Of course, the music is fine, but cannot match an audiophile source like the amazing Layla SA-CD.

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