

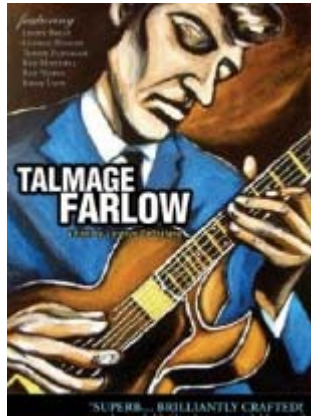


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Talmage Farlow: DVD



What ever happened to Tal Farlow? This seemed to be the burning question amongst many within the Jazz community and the Jazz Press during the late 1950's. Why would a major star, who had reached the pinnacle of his station, just "vanish" from the scene into relative obscurity? That subject would remain pretty much unanswered until 1981 when we discover, thanks to filmmaker Lorenzo DeStefano, that Tal Farlow is very much alive and well both professionally and personally and that his "disappearance" was more a "fiction" of the press than a loss of public awareness.

"*Talmage Farlow*" is an exceptional documentary that provides the viewer a unique glimpse into the history and life of master Jazz Guitarist Tal Farlow during a brief period in the early 1980's. It is a life that is both reflective and inspiring as it takes into account the duality that was Tal Farlow's existence. Internationally recognized Jazz Guitarist on the one hand with a large number of fans waiting for him to return to the world stage, while on the other hand he is right at home as a modest sign painter living on the shores of Sea Bright, New Jersey and not really wanting to be anywhere else.

The common thread through all of this though is Tal's love for the guitar, and how he reconciles his passions is captured on film for all to observe. It is a candid and sometimes surprisingly intimate accounting of who he was as a man and an artist and how "fragile" an individual he was when it came to the performance of his art. There are some heartfelt moments shared by Tal and Tal's wife that explain his "reluctance" to pursue music as a full-time profession which many of us may relate to. There also fondly reminisces from such Jazz luminaries as pianist Jimmy Lyons, Vibraphonist and "boss" Red Norvo and a very young George Benson, who have obviously nothing but wonderful sentiments to add to the brilliance that was Tal Farlow.

Amongst the wonderful people who show up on this DVD however, of special interest is the segment where Lenny Breau pays Tal a visit at home. The late Lenny Breau was a gifted and extraordinary Jazz Guitarist who made an enormous impact on the Jazz Guitar community, especially in the areas of chord-melody and artificial harmonics. Applications actually that were derived from "taking stuff" from Tal Farlow records. There is a point on the DVD where Lenny is discussing exactly that with Tal and it's kind of cool as it illustrates the impact that Tal Farlow had on guitarists world-wide. Later they do a duo concert together at a club in New Jersey and the audience goes nuts in appreciation at seeing two world-class guitarists come together for some serious guitar playing and fun. Unfortunately we only see snippets of their performance but what we do see is enough to enjoy the moment.

There is another segment on the DVD where we get to see a more complete session as Tal Farlow, Pianist Tommy Flanagan, and Bassist Red Mitchell rehearse for a trio gig. The "Penthouse Sessions" as it is titled has been floating around the Internet in various forms over the past few years and can now be seen in its full splendor as a special feature to the DVD.

And speaking of Special Features, there are few extras on this DVD that make the purchase of "Talmage Farlow" especially appealing. The main extra feature is a little over an hour's worth of out-takes from the Lenny and Tal visit. There are a lot of great moments on this segment alone and would be worth the cost of the DVD just by itself. The only problem is that there are a lot of video blackouts with just the audio track being played. However, the dialogue between Lenny and Tal is cool to hear and it's nice to get a chance to be a fly on the wall. There's a great segment where Tal and Lenny are discussing harmonics and their applications. Very cool! There are also some fine moments when both players are on Tal's porch playing a few tunes as comfortably as two friends getting together for a glass of wine or two and some good ol' guitar playing magic. And of course there is some great Tal Farlow music played throughout the DVD making it as enjoyable to listen to as it is to watch. Great stuff!

Other extras apart from the afore mentioned "Penthouse Sessions", is a cool photo gallery that spans the extent of Tal's professional life from the forties until his passing. Especially noteworthy are the photos from the "Sandra Eisner Collection" which feature Tal in his later years looking quite amazing and fit ready to play on for another fifty years. In my opinion these are classic shots and I am glad to have been able to see how gracefully he aged.

"Talmage Farlow" is a definite must-have for any serious collector, fan, or student of Jazz Guitar. It is a lasting tribute to a great artist and should prove to be an inspiration to many. And in DVD format with extra features not available on the older VHS copy it is well worth the purchase. Plus, the new cover art is by our own **Jazz Guitar Life** contributor **John Froelich** and is very cool. Enjoy!

Click here to purchase **Talmage Farlow** or go here <http://mvdb2b.com/> to see what else MVD has to offer.

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