



Jeff Tweedy

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ple, straightforward concert film. Except for some quick backstage footage and an unnecessary intro where the band performs "Skin And Bones" on paddleboats in Central Park, *Skin And Bones* sticks to the stage at Hollywood's Pantages Theater.

Again, that's not bad. But anyone who saw Foo Fighters during this abbreviated tour won't find anything new here. From Grohl's jocular introduction and performance of "Razor" to the long, explanatory anecdote preceding "Friend Of A Friend," *Skin And Bones* simply captures last summer's tour. But considering it only stopped in 13 cities, most fans missed out on the experience.

—Kyle Ryan **Grade: B**

Gorillaz
Phase Two:
Slowboat to Hades
Virgin

A fake band so dedicated to its fakeness that live concerts are prohibitively expensive, Gorillaz maintains a visual presence like none other: Birthed by Blur's Damon Albarn and comic artist Jamie Hewlett, the group is represented by cartoon characters, yet still manages to sell millions of records. DVDs, then, make as much sense as albums, and they're constructed with as much care: *Slowboat To Hades* gathers more than 40 bits and pieces, including videos, animatics, "live" performances, live performances, commercials, and more.

The clips, most starring the Gorillaz—those with real-life counterparts and some without—are stunning, though sometimes samey, though the songs, taken from the second Gorillaz album, aren't as strong as the early singles. The disc is still terrific fun, though: A puppet of foul-mouthed bassist Murdoc gives thanks to the music industry (and says "Hail Satan"), and an incredible "live" performance—in which the Gorillaz are projected onto a transparent screen and joined by a holographic Madonna—is juxtaposed with an actual live performance, in which two dozen musicians perform in darkness while cartoons flicker above. —Josh

Modell Grade: B

country music. And he was neither a spectacular singer nor a top-flight songwriter. But Jennings' dark aura made him mesmerizing onstage, where he'd growl about heartache and pluck at his gorgeous pearl-inlay guitar while the hottest C&W players in the business worked up a good head of honky-tonk steam beside him. The current *Nashville Rebel* CD box set is essential listening, and its companion DVD—collecting scattered '70s TV appearances, and sold separately—is even *more* essential viewing, because just hearing Jennings ramble through Billie Joe Shaver's "Slow Rollin' Low" isn't the same as seeing him and The Wailors on *Don Kirshner's Rock Concert*, playing the song as though it were their last earthly deed. And given Jennings' early-career friendship with poor, doomed Buddy Holly, maybe he felt it was.

Alt-country chanteuse Neko Case writes songs even grimmer than Jennings', but her stage presence is far more unassuming. On the *Live From Austin TX* DVD, Case and her tight, drum-free combo run through a set of Case originals—circa 2003—and a few choice covers, like Bob Dylan's "Buckets Of Rain." Case is in fine vocal form, as is her pal and harmonizer Kelly Hogan, and though they aren't the most dynamic performers, the Case quartet wrings every drop of emotion from "Deep Red Bells" and an early version of "Maybe Sparrow." Given the kind of career Case has had so far, this little video document—culled from PBS' *Austin City Limits*—could prove to be a cultural treasure on a par with those long-forgotten Jennings TV appearances. Thank you, television. —Noel Murray **Grade: Jennings, A; Case: A-**

Rise Against
Generation Lost
Geffen

If nothing else, *Generation Lost* has one attribute that most music DVDs

lack: an interesting hook. Sure, it has the usual stuff—music videos, making-of-the-video featurettes, and live-performance footage—but a mini-documentary called *How We Survive* deviates from the norm by focusing on the fans of Chicago punk band Rise Against. Director-producer Davy Rothbart (of *Found* magazine fame) followed Rise Against during part of Warped Tour '06, then occasionally stayed behind to interview fans at their homes. There's Markus, a 17-year-old African-American kid whose skin color alone makes him stand out at Warped Tour. There's Bill, a 47-year-old family man and right-wing Republican (especially curious, considering Rise Against's outspoken left-wing views). There's Phil, a teenager who works as a camp counselor.

The film really only delves into Markus' life, mostly because it parallels that of bassist Joe Principe. (Both lost their fathers early in life.) Although it's funny that Bill loves Rise Against *and* (presumably) George Bush, no one asks him how he resolves the two. Phil seems like a typical teenage Rise Against fan, with less of a story than the

Bad Brains
Live At
CBGB 1982
MVD

Although Bad Brains was the most influential hardcore punk band of its time, footage of its dynamic live performances is scarce. So MVD's announcement that it was adding a Bad Brains DVD to its growing collection caused a minor frenzy. *Live At CBGB* captures Bad Brains during Christmas 1982's three-day stint at the legendary New York punk club (back then, considered just another Bowery shithole), prior to the release of 1983's seminal album *Rock For Light*. By December '82, the all-black quartet had begun experimenting with reggae (a reflection of their newfound Rastafarianism), a 180-degree contrast from the blistering, technical hardcore they were pioneering. That experimentation eventually proved tumultuous, but that lay in the future. Although the energy drains from the room when Bad Brains performs reggae songs (only four here), the manic electricity of songs like "How Low Can A Punk Get," "Riot Squad," and "At The Movies" makes up for it.

Although no Bad Brains footage can live up to the legend that has proliferated over the years, *Live At CBGB* comes close. During "We Will Not," kids constantly clamber onstage to sing along or dive off, especially during "At The Movies," but the band remains in the zone, unfazed. Those moments provide a real sense of what Bad Brains was like in its prime. Twenty-four years later, it's still something to behold. —Kyle Ryan

Grade: B+

NRBQ & The
Whole Wheat Horns
Derbytown:
Live 1982
MVD

It may be hard to understand now why NRBQ once meant so much to

people, but from the moment the album *NRBQ* was released in 1969, the New Jersey-based band became a lot of fans' "great rock hope," thanks to music-for-music's-sake sets lists that jumped wildly from mambo to rockabilly to free jazz to showtunes. NRBQ's original songs were weird and witty, and though they lacked the polish and clarity that would've gotten them on the radio, they were hardly inaccessible. And live, NRBQ had more fun than any rockers of the era.

Derbytown: Live 1982 catches the band at a peak, playing in Louisville, KY to a packed club on a hot night, with the two-piece "Whole Wheat Horns" filling out the sound. Jumping between covers and originals—and even pausing for a recitation of "Sink The Bismark"—NRBQ gives the crowd something light and spirited to dance to, far removed from any of the corporate rock or edgy post-punk and new wave dominating the musical culture at the time. Nowadays, NRBQ comes off like a skilled-but-silly bar band, but in 1982, that was exactly what a lot of people needed to hear. —Noel Murray

Grade: A-