

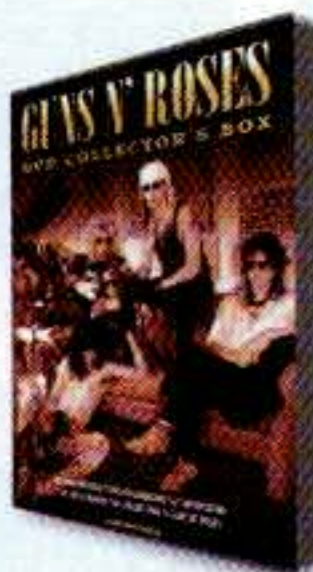
In Our Systems

This Month in DVDs, Video, and Books



Kenny Wayne Shepherd 10 Days Out: Blues from the Backroads (Reprise)

The award for sleeper blues pic of the year goes to Kenny Wayne Shepherd for this CD/DVD of deep and profoundly inspired blues collaborations. Accompanied by the ubiquitous Double Trouble, KWS joins a colorful cast of venerable blues icons, including Gatemouth Brown, B.B. King, Hubert Sumlin, and Honeyboy Edwards. Shepherd, with producer Jerry Harrison, also assembled the surviving members of both Muddy Waters's and Howlin' Wolf's backing bands, making this disc indispensable for blues fans, regardless of what purists think of KWS himself.



Guns N' Roses DVD Collector's Box (Chrome Dreams)

It's hard to tell what's more tedious: waiting for the release of *Chinese Democracy* or wading through Chrome Dreams' cheesy unauthorized documentary. With its stock footage and banal interviews, the money-grabbin' *Collector's Box* touches on every cliché in the "Behind the Music" book without feeding us juicy bits we haven't already heard. Split into two films—a band doc and an Axl doc—the set also fails to produce even a modicum of music analysis for instrument enthusiasts. In fact, the Axl disc states up front that it contains no music written by Axl Rose, obviously to steer itself clear of litigation. Thanks, but no thanks.



Sentenced Buried Alive (Century Media)

Melodic metal icons Sentenced (1991-2005) flew under the radar in the States, and that could explain their split. The two-disc, five-hour *Buried Alive*, filmed in their native Finland, is the band's visual epitaph. To hammer home the point, the band is filmed carrying and burying a casket after a long walk through the Finnish countryside. The band's swan song gig smolders but never catches fire. The work of guitarists Miika Tenkula and Sami Lopakka recalls the harmony-rich riffing of Iron Maiden without the psycho soloing. Refreshingly, they've checked their guitar egos at the door.



Megadeth That One Night: Live in Buenos Aires (Image Entertainment)

After more than two decades, some of the sheen has worn off of Dave Mustaine and Megadeth, but don't tell the kids in Buenos Aires that. Mustaine slays 25,000 of them on this killer concert, with one thrashing after another. As he screams through 90 minutes of classics like "Hangar 18" and "Symphony of Destruction" as well as newer material like "Kick the Chair," it also becomes obvious that his dexterity and speed-picking hasn't slowed much at all. Like the indefatigable Argentinians, the cameras adore Mustaine, often at the expense of co-lead player Glen Drover, who supports the Boss with understated reverence and some kick-ass licks of his own. —BOB GULLA

BOOKS

The shelves of your local bookstore are almost certainly groaning under the weight of dozens of Beatles-related tomes, but few offer much insight into the development of the Fab Four as musicians. File Richie Unterberger's *The Unreleased Beatles: Music & Film* (Backbeat) alongside Mark Lewisohn's *The Beatles Recording Sessions* and Andy Babiuk's *Beatles Gear* as one of those precious few. Unterberger has given himself a huge task—cataloging and detailing every known Beatles recording that wasn't released during the group's existence (some but hardly all of these appeared later on albums like *Live at the BBC* and the three *Anthology* discs)—and he pulls it off with admirable thoroughness and clarity. Although guitar playing isn't his principal focus, he's perceptive enough to appreciate George Harrison's inspiring seven-year transformation from a barely competent soloist into an all-time great. Be warned: You may want to buy a lot of bootlegs after reading this. —MAC RANDALL



INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS OF THE MONTH

Alfred's "No Reading Required" series continues with *No Reading Required: Metal Guitar Licks*, featuring Ken Steiger of the National Guitar Workshop.

Organizing his lesson around the construction of a 16-bar solo in E minor, Steiger covers such evergreens as the natural minor and minor pentatonic scales, alternate picking, palm muting, hammer-ons and pull-offs, bending, vibrato, double stops, and lots of trills. Good stuff, but one thing's a little weird: Steiger never uses his whammy bar in the final solo. Not once. How metal is that?

There are also no whammy antics to be found at any time during the 75-minute disc *Developing Classical Guitar Technique* (Mel Bay), but that's less of a surprise. In this video master class, Chicago College professor Denis Azabagic focuses on two complex pieces by Agustin Barrios Mangoré and Fernando Sor, breaking them down into bite-size chunks for easier digestion. His fingering and picking tips are uniformly excellent, as are his suggestions on how to best interpret various tricky passages. One thing

to note, however, is that Azabagic never plays the pieces straight through, which means that if you want to try tackling them yourself, you'll need to buy the sheet music (sold separately) as well. —MAC RANDALL

