

# DVD★Reviews

## Cardiacs

Some Fairytales From The Rotten Shed

★★★★

The Alphabet Business Concern  
ALPH 002 (DVD)

### Four little men and an outhouse

The latest release from that imperious organisation The Alphabet Business Concern comprises Cardiacs' rehearsal footage filmed just prior to The Special Garage Concerts of 2003, which saw the band revisiting songs from their pre-1984 career, or as leader Tim Smith puts it: "Tunes from when we were tiny."

Clips surfaced online years ago, but this is the first time the complete footage has been made available. Many of the tracks performed feature on *The Seaside* and *Archive Cardiacs*, but are presented here in all their reworked and gig-ready splendour.

There's a surrealist vein running through the footage as you might expect, and Timmy's impish stage persona doesn't seem at all discouraged by the fact that he is here commanding a shed and not a stage. Running a tight ship, at one point he berates Bob Leith for neglecting his drumming duties mid-song with a brusque "Twat!"

The dress-code for these rehearsals seems to have been enforced on a person-to-person basis, with the long-suffering Jim Smith – having first been made to wait outside in the rain – spending the entire session in his underpants, trying to avoid being crushed by a cymbal. Poor Jim.

Throughout this earlier material – which includes a performance of the Cardiac Arrest single from 1979 – the band's psych, punk and prog influences are somewhat more pronounced; Hopeless features vocal harmonies that recall early Pink Floyd, while the storming Icky Qualms is stuffed full of riotous energy.

With excellent sound, this is a giddy look back at the sprats and scampi that started it all, and which – it must be said – compare rather well to the bigger fish of latter-day Cardiacs.  
*Alun Hamnett*

## Black Sabbath

The End Of The End

★★★

Eagle Vision, cat no tbc (DVD/Blu-Ray)

Never say die, just goodbye  
Birmingham's foremost heavy

metal ambassadors returned to their hometown for a final gig in early 2017, bringing down the curtain on a career that began 49 years earlier. This lovingly recorded concert film reveals that it wasn't quite the last time the band played together, as it includes significantly more subdued performances and interview footage filmed in a rural farmhouse a few days after the farewell show – a strangely muted coda to the cacophony that went before.

Sabbath classics are rolled out in style at the gig proper, and director Dick Carruthers pays plenty of attention to the passionate, diehard fans witnessing the end of an era. In comparison, the after-the-event reminiscences of Ozzy Osborne, guitarist Tony Iommi and bassist Geezer Butler seem awkwardly pedestrian, Osborne displaying little of the wit and personality that made him a reality TV star back in 2002.

Despite decades of ups and downs, estrangements and full-on animosity, there remains a strong bond between the players, though they're perhaps too polite when writing this last chapter. They may have spawned generations of wild rockers, many of whom resorted to shock tactics to paper over the cracks when it comes to substance; this film paints them as almost genteel elder statesmen who have long since had anything to prove.  
*Terry Staunton*

## The Peter Green Story: Man Of The World

★★★★

Wienerworld WNRD 2469 (DVD)

### Almost sensitive retelling of much-told tale

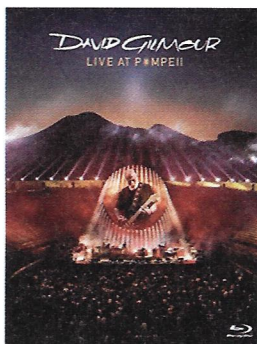
Looking at the jovial moon-faced figure laughing benignly beneath his fishing hat, it's hard to believe this is Peter Green, one of the most gifted guitarists this country has ever produced. First broadcast by BBC Four, this 2009 film traverses the much-told tale of Green's ascent from a blues boom guitar prodigy wonder to sudden pop star who suffered mental problems leading to breakdowns and ECT treatment before he could re-enter the world on his own humble terms.

It's not often comfortable viewing, following the usual formula of frustratingly short performance clips and talking



heads; here including former bandmates Mick Fleetwood, John McVie and Jeremy Spencer (a story in himself), plus brothers, producers, managers and roadies, Noel Gallagher (in curious plastic wig) and Carlos Santana, who offers the film's only insightful comments on LSD's impact on the brain.

After short shrift is given to 1970's *The End Of The Game*, the albums Green released in the 80s are ignored in favour of milking this rotund, white-haired former pop star's decline. The fact he is still alive, relatively happy and making music on his own terms should be celebrated; some geniuses weren't built for those times but at least he's lived to laugh about it.  
*Kris Needs*



## David Gilmour Live At Pompeii

★★★★

Trafalgar/Sony 89895467429  
(2DVD/Blu-Ray)

### Pomp, eh?

Whatever the differences may be between the estranged leaders of the now-defunct Pink Floyd, one of the things they both know is how to put on a spectacle.

Whereas Roger Waters' Wall got ever longer and his chimneys taller, David Gilmour's *Live At Pompeii* has all the explosive son et lumiere you would expect from him. Returning to the exact spot he visited with his old group in 1971, he celebrates his recent material and revels in his past in that most low-key manner of his.

Like in the Floyd original, it's Pompeii itself that's the true star of the film and the looming presence of Vesuvius, away in the distance, that dominates the proceedings. But whereas Adrian Maben's original captured an eerie, empty stillness, here, it is all crowds and spectacle. The lights that emanate from Gilmour's stage swell and subside in accordance with the music, and at the end of Run Like Hell, they must have given a few locals the jitters, with cause to wonder if the big old volcano had blown its top.

The revelation here is Gilmour's new band. Around the axis of him and long-serving bassman Guy Pratt, he's added former Allman Chuck Leavell; ex-Michael Jackson et al pianist Greg Pillinganes; and style guru Chester Kamen. They all make a remarkable noise and look to be having, alongside Gilmour, a rather wonderful time, especially on One Of These Days, the only song to appear in this and Floyd's original film.

Directed by trusted collaborator Gavin Elder, *Live At Pompeii* is a wonderful sequel to David Gilmour's previous filmed visit.  
*Daryl Easlea*

## Vanilla Fudge

Live At Sweden Rock 2016

★★★★

MIG MIGO1982 (DVD+CD)

### Sugar rush

Gather round, rockers of a vintage sufficiently classic to recall the age before zeppelins were leaden, purple was deep, and Sabbaths assumed a darker hue, and younglings were keen to learn the ways of the elders.

Vanilla Fudge celebrate a half century of heaviness with three-quarters of their original line-up on board, Mark Stein flanked on the spacious Sweden Rock stage by Carmine Appice (drums) and Vince Martell (guitar), with bassist Peter Bremy subbing for retiree Tom Bogert. Though Appice has kept a higher profile over the years, bandmates Stein and Martell have kept themselves match fit, and the Fudge's 11-song set features boisterous performances of their original-era reworkings of You Keep Me Hangin' On, Season Of The Witch and She's Not There nestling comfortably alongside 60s gems given amped-up makeovers (I'm A Believer, Break On Through (To The Other Side), Gimme Some Lovin' all from 2015 studio platter *Spirit Of '67*).

They still nail those soulful harmonies, and the dynamic extended arrangements, jams and solos (Martell's penchant for exotic scales makes for some head-turning lead breaks) that influenced Deep Purple are all in plentiful supply. With clear sound and visuals, this should appeal to fans and novice fudge tasters alike.  
*Rich Davenport*