

their covers to two – perhaps the best cover version of “Like A Rolling Stone” that I’ve ever heard (also great live), as well as a close-to-the-Yardbirds arrangement of “I’m A Man.” The originals, such as “It’s About Time,” “Don’t Get Left Behind,” “Marie,” and “It’s Been Too Long,” among others, all sound like gems from the mid-60s that just got dug up from a time capsule. They don’t make music like this anymore, dammit! At least, we still got bands like this fine one, though....(P.S. Norton also released a 45 of “Marie” prior to the album coming out. The B-side is a remake of Van Morrison’s “Gloria,” which destroys any version I’ve ever heard of this tune, aside from the original by Them. (John Oliver)

Bad Brains – Live At CBGBs – 1982 (Music Video Distribution) – Note: Available in both DVD and CD formats

In the last issue, in my review of Black Market Baby’s excellent *Coulda, Shoulda Woulda* CD, I mentioned that I considered BMB to be DC’s best ever punk band.... with the exception of the Bad Brains on their good nights – admittedly, infrequent. On this recently released DVD and CD, you can see and hear for yourself just what this magnificent band was capable of on a good night. They were a perfect combination of punk and reggae music, played by excellent jazz/fusion musicians, and fronted by a very intelligent but seemingly mad-at-times singer (HR), who was equally capable of mesmerizing an audience of thousands with his vocal dynamics, getting into a fist fight with a drunk in the crowd, or simply not showing up at a scheduled concert. His bizarre behavior, combined with the band’s conversion to the Rastafari movement (and the likely resulting brain damage from ganja inhalation), ended up in the Brains getting banned from most DC clubs. Around 1980, they relocated to NYC, and, while they will be forever associated with the DC punk scene, the Bad Brains wound up lasting a lot longer in NYC....where they recorded this newly released DVD and CD....and it proves that they rocked harder and faster than anyone at the peak of their game. All the classics, from “Banned In DC” to “Pay To Cum” are included here, along with the slower reggae numbers. Also highly recommended – the documentary film “American Hardcore,” which contains plenty of Bad Brains footage. (John Oliver)

Bob Dylan – Modern Times (Sony/Columbia)

So far, I’ve heard a lot of raving about how great this album is, and, at the same time, a lot of bitching from old folkies who are whining about Bob’s penchant for borrowing old

blues songs, tacking on a couple of verses of original lyrics, and claiming the tunes as his own. Regarding the latter, it’s true, he does pull a Led Zeppelin here, with Muddy Waters (“Rollin’ & Tumblin’”, “Someday Baby” (Muddy recorded it as “Trouble No More”)), Memphis Minnie (“The Levee’s Gonna Break”, originally “When The Levee Breaks”), and probably a couple of others. The fact is, though – Dylan is pretty much a blues singer at this stage of his career, much like Muddy Waters and Howlin’ Wolf in the mid-to-late 60’s. He doesn’t go in that much for the pretty folk songs or tricky melodies anymore, but, as in the case of his 2001 release, *Love and Theft*, tends to rely a lot on a 30s/40’s jazz-inflected sound as well as Chicago Blues. Bob’s still the world’s greatest lyricist, though, and his band is fucking great! They are ungodly loud live, and the songs from this new CD sound superb live. Several of them (“Thunder On The Mountain,” “When The Deal Goes Down,” “Workingman’s Blues #2”), I suspect, will be permanently added to the repertoire of Bob’s Never-Ending-Til-He-Dies tour. At present, I don’t know where this new album stacks up overall in the scheme of Dylanology....It surely doesn’t belong in the pantheon of *Bringing It All Back Home/Highway 61 Revisited/Blonde On Blonde*, but what does nowadays? I prefer it over *Time Out Of Mind*, and don’t think it’s quite as good as *Love and Theft*. It’s still good enough to blow away practically all of the competition for 2006, in my opinion. (John Oliver)

The Head Cat – Fool’s Paradise (Cleopatra)

Sometimes, great ideas on paper just don’t work out as a practical matter. For example, how about the idea of a rockabilly band with Danny B. Harvey (of the Rockats, Honeydippers, Swing Cats (with 2/3 of the Stray Cats), and solo jazz albums) on guitar, Slim Jim Phantom of the Stray Cats on drums, and...wait for it....Lemmy of Motorhead on vocals and rhythm guitar??? “Hmmm...,” you’d think, “this could be interesting!” Well, the band exists, and no, what they’ve recorded isn’t particularly interesting...or very good, for that matter. On this “debut” CD (I use quotes because the same trio put out a CD of mostly the exact same songs back in 2000, on the same label, titled *Lemmy, Slim Jim, and Danny B.*), this trio butchers 9 Buddy Holly songs, some Carl Perkins, Elvis, Johnny Cash, and Eddie Cochran, and appear to be having a great time doing so. What’s the problem, you might ask? First, Lemmy really can’t sing...so he shouldn’t try. If he just yelled his way through these tunes, with a really fast and thrashy accompaniment, much like, oh, let’s say Motorhead, it might work. But he actually tries to sing the songs faithfully, as he’s a huge rockabilly fan, and the players try to stay somewhat faithful to the original arrangements. Mistake! I’m not sure who exactly this CD