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Thursday, Jul. 08, 2010

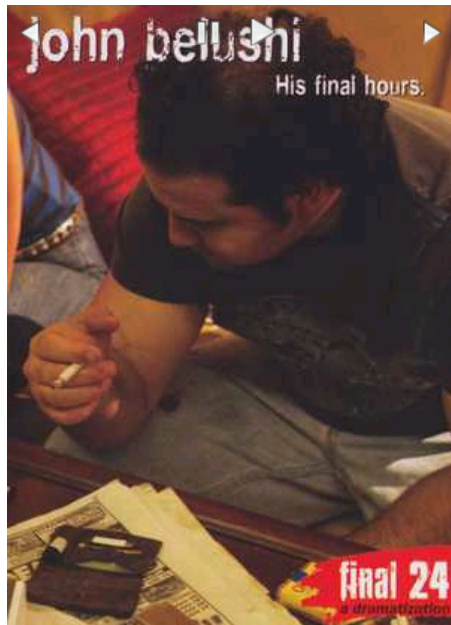
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Slick, Trout and 'Final 24' endings

This week's column focuses on bass virtuoso Julie Slick, blues-rock guitar master Walter Trout, and three chapters of the latest wave of "Final 24" DVDs.

'Julie Slick,' Julie Slick (Self-released, HHH)

Some of you know bassist/composer Julie Slick from her work with Adrian Belew in his power trio with her brother Eric.



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Her debut instrumental solo album released mid-May features an ensemble comprised of Slick's friends, including King Crimson guitarist Robert Fripp and drummer Pat Mastelotto, drummer Marco Minnemann, drummer and brother Eric Slick, Chapman Stick player Michael Bernier, and guitarist André Cholmondeley.

The instrumentals here are more listenable than the noodle soup playing of "lead bass" players like Jaco Pastorius. The bass here mostly plays busy patterns to provide a framework for other instruments.

Highlights are hard to separate because the instrumental tunes flow into one another, but at the moment I'm fond of one called "Mora," which may be about the now-retired Saints/Colts coach, and a funkier one called "Cage Match."

Fans of progressive instrumental music will enjoy this CD.

'Final 24: John Belushi - His Final Hours,' (MVDvisual, HHHH)

Three years prior to the events depicted in this June 29 volume of the "Final 24" series, John Belushi achieved a remarkable trifecta with the most popular movie ("Animal House"), the most popular late-night television show ("Saturday Night Live") and the most

popular album ("Briefcase Full of Blues" by the Blues Brothers).

However, Belushi's years of late-night writing, tendency to excess, the drug culture of the late 1970s, and an unhappy childhood all combined to precipitate a drug binge that led to his death on March 5, 1982, of cocaine/heroin toxicity.

Interviews with John's friend, Dan Ackroyd, his widow Judy, his manager Bernie Brillstein and Chicago-based Second City colleagues from the happiest time in his life flesh out yet another remarkable, ultimately fatal chapter in this interesting series. Grab this DVD if you're a fan of John Belushi.

'Final 24: Anna Nicole Smith - Her Final Hours,' (MVDvisual, HHHH)

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