



'Live Through the '80s,' Johnny Winter (MVDvisual, 4 stars)

This Sept. 21 DVD release looks back at the 1980s through the eyes of one of America's favorite guitar slingers, albino bluesman Johnny Winter. Eighteen performances from different locations from Canada to New Hampshire in giant to intimate venues, plus promotional videos, fun times on the tour bus and more are included. Johnny's guitar playing was superb, and his band is tightly powerful. However, before completing this review, I Googled the name of an album I had and loved long ago, "Johnny Winter And Live."

That album, featuring Rick Derringer (second guitar, vocals), the great Bobby Caldwell on drums and Randy Hobbs on bass is one of the greatest live albums ever. Back to the current DVD: A Winter original, "Stranger" and a finger-picked cover "Sweet Papa John" from Canada; the high-speed "Lights Out" from New Hampshire; and the shuffling "Mad Dog" (New Jersey) are among the highlights. Get a CD or clean vinyl version of the "And" version mentioned above. This one and MVD's Johnny Winter 1970s DVD released in 2007 are both recommendable.

- Ricky Flake