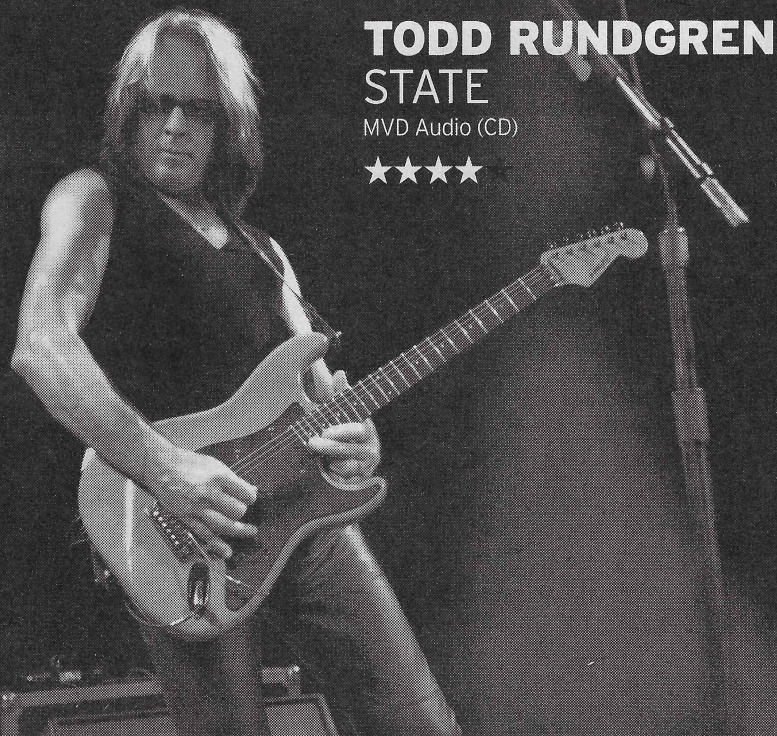


REVIEWS



TODD RUNDGREN STATE

MVD Audio (CD)

★★★★

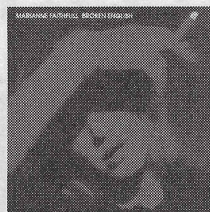
STATE

ONE THING ABOUT Todd Rundgren's reputation as an artist is that you never know what to expect. His creativity is really out there in a special place all his own. One shudders at what must go on deep in his psyche as he, again and again, creates music with no limitations, often both deeply satisfying and disturbing at the same time.

No one other than Todd could have created the music on "State." The album continues his out-of-this-galaxy musical vision. This time around, he mixes rock with soul and electronica. What is really cool is the fact that on some songs, such as "Angry Bird," you can really hear some of the influence of The Cars, a band he fronted on The New Cars tour a few years ago. Mixing with that style is a whole lotta electronica — not necessarily a favorite brand of music for classic rockers. However, electronica done up Rundgren style is, predictably, more interesting than something one would hear at a teenage rave.

"In My Mouth" is such a cool song, in so many ways, that one can't help getting into this music. Hats off to the genius, as he has once again found another musical envelope to push, adding to his legacy of thinking outside of the box. Hell, in Todd's mind, I am sure the box doesn't even exist ... this is all Rundgren, boundless and full of ethereal sounds with some cool-ass distorted guitar licks thrown in for good measure.

— Jeb Wright



MARIANNE FAITHFULL BROKEN ENGLISH

Island/Universal
(2-CD Deluxe Edition)

★★★★★

At the beginning of the 1970s, a time when Marianne Faith-

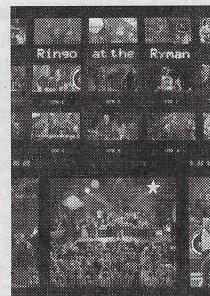
full was increasingly plagued by drug problems, it seemed unlikely she'd even have a career by the decade's end, let alone release an album that has gone on to become a classic.

To those whose strongest memory of Faithfull were the dulcet tones of the Jagger-Richards composition "As Time Goes By," "Broken English" was a revelation; a world-weary recounting of how much had changed for Faithfull since 1964.

Her voice is cracked and raw, which adds a great poignancy to the songs: the wistful "Witches' Song;" "Brain Drain," which details a failing relationship; the drug-mired atmosphere of "Guilt;" the diary-of-a-mad-housewife of "The Ballad of Lucy Jordan;" the unnerving title track, inspired by a comment made by German terrorist Ulrike Meinhoff when he was arrested. The album is most notorious for the bitter "Why'd Ya Do It," a profane castigation of a cheating lover; it also has one of the best ever Lennon covers, a subtle, spare take on "Working Class Hero."

This reissue also includes the album's original mix, which is decidedly different, having a bit more rock 'n' roll feel, before Steve Winwood layered the album with synthesizers. It's the version of the album that Faithfull herself prefers, though to this writer it's the released version that's superior — or is that because it's the version that's most familiar? Now listeners can decide for themselves. The album also includes remixed single versions of a few songs, and the short "Three Songs by Marianne Faithfull," filmed in 1979. This recent reissue is only available as an import, but it's easy to find online. If you're a fan of this album, it's a must-have, especially due to its having the original album mix.

— Gillian G. Gaar



RINGO STARR AND HIS ALL STARR BAND RINGO AT THE RYMAN UMe (DVD)

★★★★★

In case you missed Ringo Starr's last outing with his current crop of All Starrs, this DVD, filmed on Starr's 72nd birthday, July 7, 2012, at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium, will catch you up nicely. (There hasn't been a live All Starr band release since 2010, and that was of the 2008 lineup). It's the 12th edition