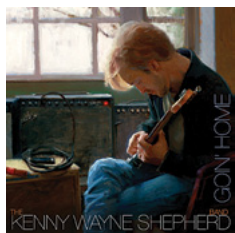


the epic stomp of Led Zeppelin and “All Falls Down” is a bombastic power ballad.

Watt plays with old-school zeal and maturity beyond his years. He’s perfectly cast to fill the chasm between Hughes’ rumbling bass and Bonham’s thunderous heavy foot. He’s carved out a niche blending Jimi Hendrix, Mick Ronson, and Jimmy Page with his own voice.

California Breed successfully mixes psychedelia, soul, and heavy rock into a tasty brew. – **Oscar Jordan**



Kenny Wayne Shepherd Band Goin' Home

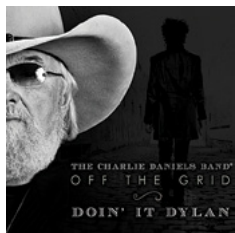
The latest from Kenny Wayne Shepherd is an homage to players and songs that influenced him while he was coming up. For the most part, it’s a splendid collection with some of the blistering guitar work you expect.

“Palace Of The King” is soul heaven. Shepherd’s playing channels Jimi Hendrix complete with blistering sharp-nine chords throughout. His version of the Muddy Waters’ classic “I Love The Life I Live” has the perfect laid-back feel that is cut only by a down-and-dirty Shepherd solo.

There are a number of friends who appear on the record, including Robert Randolph, Joe Walsh, and Ringo Starr, among others. The slinky blues of “Breaking Up Someone’s Home” gets a lift from the guitar and voice of guest Warren Haynes.

The main attraction remains Shepherd’s guitar work. His energy and chops help make the droning boogie of “Still A Fool” a highpoint of the record.

While he honors his heroes, one song seems misplaced. Given folks penchant for saying he started his career as a Stevie Ray Vaughan clone, why do a note-for-note cover of “The House Is Rockin’”? – **JH**



Charlie Daniels Band Off The Grid: Doin’ It Dylan

Before he became a leader of the Southern Rock movement, Charlie Daniels was part of a new breed of Nashville studio musicians who came to prominence in the late ’60s. In that role, he played guitar on Bob Dylan’s groundbreaking



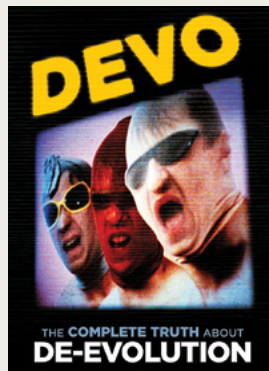
SATISFACTION FOR DEVO

Devo is far from the only band that was years ahead of its time. The difference is that 40 years after its formation, the group’s music and videos are *still* ahead of their time, and any attempts to pigeonhole the band (mainly by association) fall short. Devo is a genre unto itself.

This 70-minute DVD includes 20 song videos (many pre-dating MTV), along with footage of early gigs and commentary by members Mark Mothersbaugh and Gerald Casale. That latter “bonus feature” of DVDs is typically a snoozer, but offers fascinating insight here, and also shows that the band was involved in the production of the DVD – as opposed to the unauthorized “critical review” DVDs of rock artists that seem to come out weekly.

Devo started as a video concept before it became a working band. The lineup fluctuated, with personnel and instrument swapping, and when they made the videos for “Secret Agent Man” and “Jocko Homo” in ’76, they had no record

label and didn’t exist as a band – the manifesto being that they were a self-contained unit where visuals,



Devo The Complete Truth About De-Evolution

theatrics, and staging were as important as the music. Embracing surrealism and Dadaism, nonsense and irrationality played as big a part, or bigger, than logic.

Devo were performance artists playing the part of rock stars – nerds, and proud of it. The irony is that they became a successful band, because they *were* talented and, more important, inventive. Still, fans and critics weren’t always sure what was a joke (invariably

dark humor) and what, if anything, was serious.

Their guitar anti-hero stance was perfectly on display when they took the Stones’ orgasmic “Satisfaction” beat and chopped it up into something utterly undanceable. But, of course, their bona fide hit single, “Whip It,” was inescapably catchy – played by five guys in turtlenecks, shorts, and red plastic planters for hats.

Mothersbaugh and his brother Bob, as well as Casale and his brother Bob all played keyboards, bass, and guitars, and the group went through more drummers than Spinal Tap. Bob Mothersbaugh earns props for playing a La Baye 2x4, an infamous ’60s flop produced in Green Bay, Wisconsin, as well as his mis-shaped custom Ibanez “spud” guitar. Mark meanwhile often played a Tele with various stomp boxes duct-taped right onto its face. They never resorted to pyrotechnics, but were masters of hooks, in songs like “Freedom Of Choice,” “Through Being Cool,” and the power-chording “Gates Of Steel” – the latter included here in a live performance from 1980.

Technically, Devo should be spoken of in present tense, although they’ve split up and reformed several times. Three-fourths of the current edition are original members, and, though they never won a Grammy, one can imagine them relishing the irony of the Daft Punk “robots” accepting five statuettes at this year’s ceremony. Maybe one day, the music industry will catch up with Devo as well. – **Dan Forte**