

DVD★Reviews



AC/DC Plug Me In

★★★★★
Columbia 710417 (3-DVD)
**It's a long way to the top if you
wanna rock, an' rock, an' rock ...**

This beast of a release is essential for any AC/DC collection. Disc One of this *Space Invaders*-themed package spans 1975-80, the Bon Scott era, featuring everything from an early '75 performance of *High Voltage* to the first performance of *Highway To Hell*, initially broadcast on Dutch television in 1979. The extras are exceptional, with a host of interviews with the band in laddish, brawly humour, as well as four songs on splashy, audience-view neo-bootleg Super 8 from one of Bon Scott's final gigs, at Nice in '79. All eight minutes of the scrapbook bit with the flying press cuttings is just downright scary.

Disc Two has a lot of career to cover, and it does a more than decent job. AC/DC were such a reliably great band that the performances vary little from top-notch over two-and-a-half-decades of gigs and Japanese TV appearances. Extras here are also multitudinous, with a video jukebox as well as more interviews, a *Beavis & Butthead* cartoon and Malcolm and Angus performing *Rock Me*, Baby onstage with The Rolling Stones. The deluxe edition also features a third DVD with 21 more performances and facsimiles of merchandise, if five hours of DC rockin' it up ain't enough. Guess sometimes, it ain't. *Joe Shooman*

The Casualties Made In NYC

★★★★★
SideOneDummy SD 1338-2
NY street punks rip it up
The initial line-up of New York hardcore merchants The Casualties was formed way back in 1990 by singer Jorge, releasing their debut 7", *40 Oz Casualty*, the same year. Guitarist Jake joined three years later, in time to appear on the band's second outing, *A Fuckin' Way Of Life*, and since then they've toured doggedly around the world, building a healthy fan base of (mostly) young punks equally obsessed with UK82.

They'll never win any prizes for originality, and few songs stand out, but when firing on all

cylinders The Casualties' blend of The Exploited, GBH and Discharge, with even more fire and venom, is something to behold. After yet another solid year of touring, they played a homecoming gig at NY's Knitting Factory in March of this year. A typically corrosive set, captured on this DVD, it's interspersed with a guided tour by a "mysterious hobo", who takes the viewer around the band's early haunts. You might want to take a shower afterwards, but the band members also show us their less than hygienic tour bus, which may be of more interest to Environmental Health Officers. To top it off you also get a CD of the entire show. If you're a fan, you can't go wrong with this one. *Shane Baldwin*

Donovan The Donovan Concert In LA

★★★★★
Wienerworld WRND 2428
**Pleasant life as a 60s
troubadour without the pressure**

It must be nice to be Donovan. All round the world there are people – not too many, not too few – who love you. Your songs helped to define a generation, but you don't have the "Voice Of A Generation" tag that weighs Dylan down. You have a wealth of stories about hanging out with groovy cats like John, Paul, George, Ringo and Jimi. You get to introduce your daughter on stage. You can wear velvet loon pants and paisley shirts in your 60s without anyone minding.

Such are the thoughts that pop up while watching this DVD, Mr Leitch's first. It's a pretty straightforward rendering of what must have been a nice night at the Kodak Theatre in LA in front of an appreciative crowd. David Lynch does the introductions and the proceeds went to his foundation for transcendental meditation.

The visuals are mixed up with some effective Ken Burn-style rostrum work and the sound is crystal clear. All the hits are performed, ably supported by the bass and percussion of Tom Mansi and Stewart Lawrence. If you caught the Beat Café tour, you will recognise the groove Donovan is working, though there's none of that new material in this show. More's the pity. *Tim Holmes*

Nick Drake: Under Review

★★★
Chrome Dreams/Sexy Intellectual
SIDVD 527

A tale well told (already)
It's brave of a company often over-reliant on peripheral footage of the artists they cover to attempt a documentary on one of whom no actual footage exists. Attempt it Chrome Dreams have, and it's underwhelming.

For its list of contributors the film has cast a wide net. The facts



Otis Redding: "Ten acres of garlic."

Otis Redding The Legacy Of Otis Redding

★★★★★
Reelin' In The Years 0602517370616
First full-length tribute to the King

There has only ever been one King Of Soul. 40 years after his passing, the throne remains vacant. As one of his LP titles hinted, Otis Redding can claim to have written the dictionary of soul. More than any other man, he used every ounce of his being, every nuance of his God-given voice, to wring the last iota of emotion from any song. This DVD devoted to his life and music is proof.

We see performances of enduring soul songs, sourced from legendary concerts such as the Stax-Volt Tour in London (in which he whips himself, his band and his audience into such a frenzy that it comes close to being a religious experience) and forgotten TV shows such as *Where The Action Is*. We hear revealing, moving interviews with his widow Zelma, lead guitarist Steve Cropper, and Stax boss Jim Stewart.

Live excerpts, anecdotes, recordings and snippets of interviews with Redding (no marks to the British interviewer who bluntly asks "When are you going back?") paint a vivid picture of a man whose talent and charisma were as big as his frame. After his tragic death, neither soul music nor Stax were ever the same. This wonderfully evocative, lovingly assembled DVD is a spectacular tribute. *Mike Atherton*

Q&A | Otis Remembered

Steve Cropper (Booker T & The MGs)

[The Stax-Volt tour of Europe] changed the musicians. We were treated more like royalty and with respect in England. It was amazing. When we'd finish a show there would be hundreds of people

wanting to touch us, grabbing a piece of hair, wanting an autograph. That was just unheard of, especially in the States.

I got to be around Elvis quite a bit, and I knew how charisma worked. When Elvis entered a room, everything stopped. Very few people on this planet have that, and Otis Redding had that.

Rob Bowman (Producer)

He really leaps out of film for the same reasons that anybody who got a chance to see him was simply mesmerised. Otis developed an English audience slowly. It began to mushroom with a song that wasn't a hit for him in the US: his cover of The Temptations' *My Girl*. When Otis played there in fall of 1966, the word of mouth was extraordinary. He was given a whole show on *Ready Steady Go*. Lots of people in those audiences were musicians and the hipper people around that scene, like The Rolling Stones and Beatles, and a lot of musicians who weren't as famous yet, like Peter Gabriel, who talks about that show as transforming his life.

Zelma Redding (Otis' Widow)

Otis has always been bigger in England than the US, based on the respect and the amount of licensing requests we get for commercials. It took me many years to be convinced to allow this film to be made, and I'm very happy.

Wayne Jackson (The Mar-Keys)

Initially it was going to be Otis and his guys who went on the road with him. Jerry Wexler said, "No. They want to hear the sound of Stax." I was there the whole time and thrilled the whole time. I loved Otis and he loved me. We were big friends. We were there to support and glorify Otis Redding, and we did that. And it shows on screen. Sam & Dave tried to cut him every night, but they never did. They were as strong as nine acres of garlic, but Otis was ten acres of garlic! As told to *Harvey Kubernick*