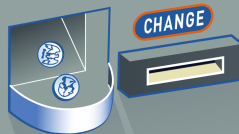


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## Quick Flicks

By Kevin Wierzbicki

# Johnny Winter, Johnny 'Guitar' Watson, The Wentus Blues Band and Ronnie Earl and The Broadcasters

Kevin Wierzbicki gives us the lowdown on some bluesy new music DVD releases from such notable names as Johnny Winter, Johnny "Guitar" Watson, The Wentus Blues Band and Ronnie Earl and The Broadcasters.

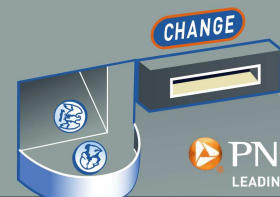
### Johnny Winter - *Live Through the '70s* MVD

This film presents a compilation of fourteen performances filmed at 7 different locations primarily in Europe. The guitarist is undeniably hot throughout but the show begins with the spotlight on sibling Edgar as the band rips through a version of the Edgar Winter Group's hit instrumental "Frankenstein." Edgar not only takes the lead with his synth work, he switches to a second set of drums and duels with drummer Uncle John Turner for an extended version of the song's "solo." The rest of the film though belongs to Johnny as he shows his love of blues with numbers like "Be Careful of the Fool," "Tell the Truth" and "Mean Town Blues" and affinity for early era rock'n'roll songs like "Boney Maroney" and "Johnny B. Goode." Winter is in particularly fine vocal form for a razor-sharp version of "Rock and Roll Hootchie Koo" performed with his band but the standout track here features Johnny leading an all-star group (Dr. John, Junior Wells, Buddy Miles, Mike Bloomfield) on "Walkin' Through the Park" at the Chicago Blues Summit in 1974. The various sources for this footage means that the camerawork is not consistent throughout but there is far more good than bad and Winter fans will find this film is a keeper.

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### Johnny "Guitar" Watson - *Live in Concert 1993* Charly

Watson had something of a chameleonic career, reinventing himself as the times changed. He was a bluesman, a rhythm & blues singer and in his final incarnation, a guitar-slinging pimp daddy. Watson invented that persona in the '70s and was still using it at the time of this show even though it was out of date to the point of being cornball by then. The strutting and preening about the stage in disco-era duds would be quite tiresome if not for the fact that Watson otherwise puts on a good show with his singing and finally, five songs in, with his guitar on "Gangster of Love." Once the ax is in his hand Watson seems to have a ball as he screeches through "Ain't That a Bitch," hits a blues groove for "Three Hours Past Midnight" and takes several opportunities to hop into the crowd and jam as he wades thirty rows deep. The main concert closes with fan favorite "A Real Mother for Ya" but longtime followers of Watson's career will probably find the trio of songs appended as extras ("Ain't That a Bitch," "Doing Wrong Woman," "Bow Wow") of more value; they were filmed in 1996 shortly before Watson's death.

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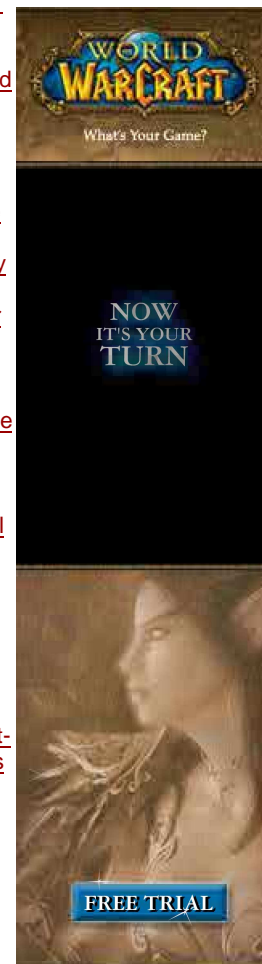
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[Preview and Purchase This CD Online](#)**The Wentus Blues Band - *Family Meeting***

Ruf

*Family Meeting* is a documentary but it is loaded with performance; about twenty cuts in all. Wentus Blues Band is a long-running group from Finland that's worked with a veritable who's who of modern blues stars and they decided to invite a bunch of them over to Finland to celebrate the band's twentieth anniversary. So you have folks like Eric Bibb, Louisiana Red, Eddie Kirkland, Lazy Lester, Kim Wilson of the Fabulous Thunderbirds and Omar Dykes of Omar and the Howlers joining the band onstage individually and in various combinations. The offstage footage is interesting too as the stars relax over dinner or tell stories in more candid settings. Wentus is a well-oiled blues machine in their own right and they show it here backing up such diverse numbers as Louisiana Red's funky "Ride on Red" and Eddie Kirkland's booming "Pick Up the Pieces." Highlights are many and former Rolling Stones guitarist Mick Taylor's joining in for a take on Bob Dylan's "Blind Willie McTell" is among the best.

[Preview and Purchase This CD Online](#)**Ronnie Earl and the Broadcasters - *Hope Radio Sessions***

Stony Plain

If you were to make a list of great blues guitarists who are not known commensurate with their talent, Earl would be very near the top of the list. Earl very rarely plays live but this film catches him in concert on two evenings, opening the first night with the swinging "Bobby's Bop" before moving into a slow burn sizzler called "Blues for the Homeless" where keys man Dave Limina gives the song additional street-cred with knowing Hammond organ fills. Limina also shines on piano on the first set's closer "New Gospel Tune." The second set is only three songs long but comprised of lengthy Chicago-style jams "Blues for Otis Rush" and "Blues for the West Side." All of the songs are instrumentals and all are electric until Earl switches to acoustic to close out the show with "Lightnin' Hopkins Thing."

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