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New 'Under Review' worthy successor to first

"Under Review 1980-1991," Queen (MVD Visual/Chrome Dreams,

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This late August release is a worthy follow-up to the first Queen "Under Review" volume reviewed awhile back, which documented their rise to fame during the 1970s. During the 80's, Queen endured some rough times, since they were neither old wave nor new wave, but thoroughly self-contained and individual. They flirted with a variety of styles, and several of those flirtations threatened to sink them. However, they carried on as one of the worlds hottest and most influential live and studio bands until singer Freddie Mercury died from AIDS complications.

Their album "Hot Space" owed much to Mercury and bassist John Deacon's love of then-current American funk/disco, specifically the influential band Chic. The trademark Queen sound was submerged too deeply for most critics and fans. After helping MTV to the top with "Bohemian Rhapsody," Queen got in trouble a few years later with a sexy video for "Body Language" and a video featuring the band in drag for "I Want to Break Free."

American authorities, and South American revolutionary factions, didn't take to the hedonistic Mercury prancing in a mini-skirt; and, sales and image suffered. However, they rebounded toward the end of the decade with several well-received albums which tastefully added disparate elements to their guitar/vocal-heavy sound. Hits from the 1980s featured here include "Radio Ga Ga," "I Want it All," "The Show Must Go On" and "One Vision."

Get this and other "Under Review" titles at local music video outlets or shop online at www.mvdb2b.com.

"Under Review," Sandy Denny (MVD/Sexy Intellectual,

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Sandy Denny is revered by her fans, including former Led Zeppelin vocalist Robert Plant, as one of the finest British female singers ever. She shares vocal duties with Plant on Zep's "Battle of Evermore," and has an impressive but under-heard body of work. This 8/29 DVD attempts to redress this public imbalance and reveal why she remains an inspiration to her devoted fans.

Sandy started singing in public as a teenager, accompanying herself on acoustic guitar and singing mostly traditional material without the over-reverence of older traditionalists. However, she lacked songwriting confidence as a solo artist. This led to an album with The Strawbs before a longer and more fruitful merger with Fairport Convention. This outfit, which also contained talented guitarist and emerging songwriter Richard Thompson, was the perfect vehicle for Denny's angelic, majestic vocals.

Unfortunately the wonderful songs, including Thompson's early anthem, "Meet on the Ledge," weren't enough to carry the first Fairport album with Sandy ("What We Did on Our Holidays") to commercial success. The band made two more groundbreaking albums during Denny's first tenure.

Critical acclaim and lasting musical impact weren't enough for Sandy Denny. None of her projects, either with bands or solo, gained mass appeal; and, she took this personally. Several DVD contributors feel that she had a physical/chemical imbalance that made alcohol affect her more extremely than it would have normally. She died April 21, 1978, of a brain hemorrhage following a drinking-related fall. For more information about this immensely talented, under-recognized artist, get this DVD.

Also, the Deacons will close out September Saturday night with a rockabilly garden party starting at 6:30 p.m. at Darwell's Café (127 East First Street in Long Beach, 868-8946), and perform there again Oct. 4 as part of Cruisin' the Coast. Come on down!

sound check

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