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DVD Roundup

By [Darren Ressler](#) | Nov 20, 2007

The holidays are around the corner and DVDs make the perfect gift for almost every music fan. Here are reviews of five brand new releases. *Caveat emptor!*

1. DJ Krush / *History of DJ Krush* (Sony Japan) This exhaustive three-disc set presents the life of legendary Japanese turntablist/producer DJ Krush filmed over the past decade or so. The first two discs contain lots of behind the scenes footage, including video from various live dates. The artsy quality of the direction reiterates the things musicians—not fans—find interesting, such as walking with their luggage in slow motion and flying from one gig to another. *Boring!* The third disc is the best of the lot because it contains excellent video footage of Krush's collaborations with Zap Mama, C.L. Smooth and Esthero, among others. This set is excessive but if anyone's allowed an ego pass, it should be DJ Krush.

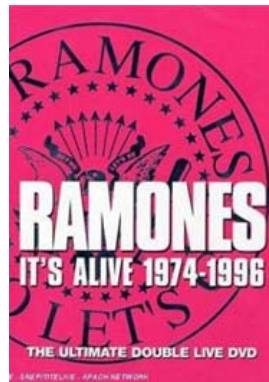
Rating: 3/5



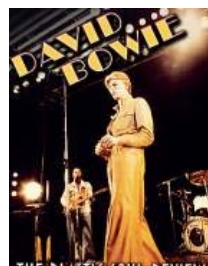
2. The Ramones / *It's Alive 1974-1996* (Rhino)

I'm not their biggest Ramones fan, but I've always appreciated the raw honesty, frantic three-minute songs and cool New Yawk accents. *It's Alive 1974-1996* revisits the band in various incarnations (mostly performing at sold-out concerts all over the world and a few daft TV appearances) over two tumultuous decades. Most of the footage is surprisingly good and reminded me that even later, less popular songs like "I Wanna Live" and "Pet Semetary" still stand the test of time. *1-2-3-4!*

Rating: 4/5



3. David Bowie / *The Plastic Soul Review* (Sexy Intellectual) This is a great (and unauthorized) look at David Bowie's Plastic Soul era, a period in his 40-year career where he ditched U.K. life for the trappings of America. For a cultural chameleon able to mine cultural elements and direct them toward his own work, this period, unlike his attempt in the late '90s to produce drum 'n' bass, is mostly successful. On *The Plastic Soul Review* respected journalists discuss the era which spawned three blues/soul albums and led to Berlin trilogy. Self-indulgent, sexually ambiguous and



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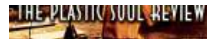
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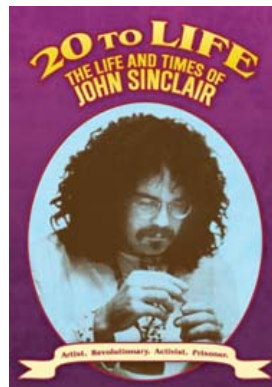
always suffering from legal woes, the post *Ziggy Stardust* era Bowie is a lot like today's incarnation: past his prime but always interesting.



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Rating: 4/5

4. *20 To Life: The Life and Times of John Sinclair* (MVD Visual) In film 101 you learn that the most important element of a documentary is that you have to connect to the subject at hand. In the case of *20 To Life: The Life and Times of John Sinclair*, I couldn't relate to the protagonist at all. A cultural activist and manager of '60s band the MC5, avid pot smoker John Sinclair faced off with authorities—and won—after facing 20 years in jail for drug charges. While I sympathize with this victim of the war on drugs, Sinclair comes off as smug and thinks he's smarter than everyone else. Good luck to him.



Rating: 1/5

5. *Metalocalypse: Season One* (Warner Bros.) On this edgy animated series airing on Adult Swim, Dethklok—a death metal band comprised of several unsavory characters—is the most successful band in the world. In the first episode, they're paid millions of dollars by a coffee company to play one song at a concert in Norway. A typical gig features the murder and mayhem of its fans and various hijinx, but the real fun is watching these idiots figure out the simplest things in life (such as cooking dinner), while our government officials plot their demise.



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