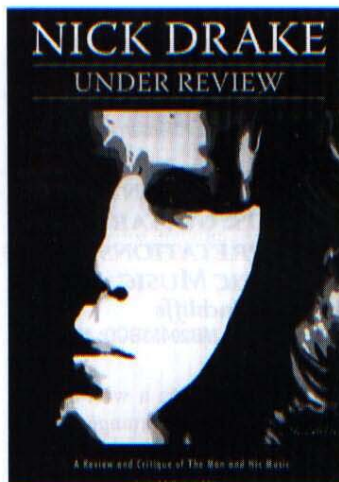


for instance), but the many magical moments more than make up for the unevenness. One does get a feeling for the people involved; this writer has listened to Moura for years, but getting to view his impish good nature adds a new dimension to the music. And some of the performances are stunning.

Strangely, there seem to be two different soundtracks CDs available. The one issued in Europe has more accompanying notes and has 19 tracks (its U.S. counterpart has only 14), but of course it will be more expensive for North American listeners to track down. Either way, the music is just as compelling on its own terms as it is in the context of the film.

Much more easily described is *En vivo en la Argentina*, which is a straightforward concert video of composer/accordionist Raúl Barboza and his group. Barboza is billed as the "Ambassador of Chamamé," a style associated with his native region that he has developed and extended. There are some Indian elements and some that sound similar to tango, and as that music has found a warm reception internationally here it might worth quoting the great Astor Piazzolla on the subject of Barboza and chamamé: "Only Barboza can have this incredible 'correntino swing' which Cocomarola, Santa Ana — his predecessors — had. He is a fighter, highly deserving of my respect and admiration." Here Barboza is joined by guitar, harp, bass, and percussion to create music that utilizes nicely turned impressionistic passages to set up expressionist soul-baring that is similar to Piazzolla's tango. It seems this virtuoso can something striking and unexpected with every musical idea; just when you think he has gotten all that can be gotten out of something he delves that extra bit deeper. He's also a warm and engaging performer. If you're a fan of South American music, then you really need to check out this master; even listeners who don't generally care for the accordion are likely to be swept away. And while it's great to sit down and really watch the show, it's also awfully nice to have the soundtrack CD handy in the car to liven up a dull drive.

— Duck Baker (London, England)



### NICK DRAKE: UNDER REVIEW

Sexy Intellectual Productions SIDVD527 (2007)

Jeremy Mason (childhood friend), Ashley Hutchings (who first brought Drake to the attention of Joe Boyd, Drake's first record producer), Patrick Humphries and Trevor Dann (Drake biographers), Ralph McTell and Robin Williamson (fellow folk artists of the 60s and 70s), Dave Mattacks (session drummer on Drake albums), Jerry Gilbert (journalist and publicist), and others who knew Nick Drake or were heavily influenced by his music appear throughout this DVD to add their colorful commentary on Drake's intriguing life and times. The narration is fairly straightforward on Drake's history, aided by numerous family photos and reminiscences by friends and highlighted by swirls and snippets of his music and film footage. Drake, a gifted singer/songwriter, got a recording contract early on, while at Cambridge, but never saw or received great acclaim or fanfare with his music while living. Drake officially released only three records — *Five Leaves Left*, *Bryter Layter*, and *Pink Moon* — but in the last two decades Drake, who passed away in 1974, has been name-checked by virtually every sensitive and romantic folkie in the business.

— T.J. McGrath (Woodbridge, CT)

### GUITAR ARTISTRY OF RORY BLOCK: COUNTRY BLUES GUITAR

Vestapol 13108 (2007)

Imagine a wide-ranging conversation with folk and blues guitarist Rory Block, who met and learned from some of the masters of the

blues when she was a teenager — men like Son House and Mississippi Fred McDowell — and who has forged her own way of playing the work of Delta blues icon Robert Johnson. That's what is here. It's not an instructional tape, although Block plays many songs to go along with what she's talking about, and it's shot so the viewer can get an idea of what she's doing. She discusses her technique and her guitar, but it is the ideas and experiences behind her work that reveal the power of this artist. Block gives an especially illuminating account of meeting Robert Johnson's grandson and how they ended up on stage together, and what happened when they did. One drawback to the program: There's way too much camera movement. Block is an intense player who throws her whole body into communicating her songs, so the zooms, pushes, pulls, and dissolves of the shots, while professionally done, detract from the sense of the narrative. That said, it's a really powerful and absorbing program of music and conversation that's accessible to anyone who loves acoustic music. Block plays all or part of numerous songs, including "Titanic," "Stones in My Passway," "Canned Heat," "Lovin' Whiskey," and "Spider Boy."

— Kerry Dexter (Tallahassee, FL)

### BEST OF THE FLATT & SCRUGGS TV SHOW: VOL 3 Shanachie/Country Music Foundation SH 613 (2007)

### BEST OF THE FLATT & SCRUGGS TV SHOW: VOL 4 Shanachie/Country Music Foundation SH 614 (2007)

With sponsorship from the Martha White Flour Company, and later, the PET Milk Company, the weekly aired "The Flatt & Scruggs TV Show" played an essential role in the evolution of bluegrass from 1955 until 1969. Together with the Foggy Mountain Boys, Lester Flatt (lead vocals/guitar) and Earl Scruggs (banjo) continued to expand the genre that they had helped to originate as members of Bill Monroe's Bluegrass Boys. Their mixture of hill country breakdowns, fiddle/banjo duets, vocal quartets, country ballads, gospel tunes, and "Hee Haw"-like humor remains the format of most bluegrass bands today. Volumes three and four of *Best of the Flatt & Scruggs TV Show* bring the list of available

shows to eight of the 24 shows that were rediscovered after years of being lost. While the chance to view the original architects of bluegrass at their prime is something no one should pass up, both of the recent volumes are enhanced by the appearances of guest musicians. Volume three includes a December 1961 show and a January 1962 show featuring then-seven-year-old mandolin player, Ricky Skaggs. In addition to an undated show, volume four has a March 1962 broadcast featuring Scruggs' then-eight-year-old son, Randy Lynn Scruggs, now an acclaimed session player and producer. Playing Mama Maybelle Carter's autoharp on the Carter Family's "The Wildwood Flower," he joins his father's group for the string band tune "Homestead on the Farm (I Wonder How the Old Folks Are at Home)."

— Craig Harris (Chicopee, MA)

### RAY CHARLES: LIVE AT MONTREUX 1997

Eagle Eye Media EE 39161-9 (2007)

Filmed during his third, and final, appearance at the Montreux Jazz Festival, in 1997, *Live at Montreux* shows that at 67 years old, Ray Charles (1930-2004) remained one of the most charismatic and dynamically exciting entertainers America has ever produced. Accompanying himself on piano and joined by a 15-piece orchestra directed by Al Jackson and his background singers, the Raelettes, Charles delivers a 12-tune treatise on the true meaning of soul.

— Craig Harris (Chicopee, MA)

### JOHN GORKA: THE GYPSY LIFE (THE COLLECTORS EDITION)

AIX Meida Group AIX 83053 (2006),  
2-DVD

When John Gorka set out to do a concert video, he pulled out all the stops, producing this double-disc set brimming with surprises. For the bulk of the concert segment, filmed in a Los Angeles theater without an audience, Gorka assembled a small all-star ensemble consisting of Michael Manring on fretless bass, Susan Werner on piano and guitar, Amelia K. Spicer on background vocals, and Russ Rentler, who played with Gorka and Richard Shindell in their college group, the Razy Dazzy Spasm Band, on mandolin. Gorka and company