

GETTING WHAT YOU WANT

...AND BEING CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR BY SUZANNE CADGÈNE

was right at home, cracking jokes about his age (and girth) and there was the recurring prank around the count-off.

I don't want to give away too much, because it is a real show. I just want you to see this incredible musician who, at age 63, rocks ever harder.

ROBIN THE HAMMER

The Monkees Mayo Performing Arts Center Morristown, NJ

"Welcome back to the stage Micky, Davy and Peter!" So began a (pre)fabulous show that had Monkeemaniacs singing (not screaming) along from the opening "I'm A Believer" and upon their feet dancing (or moshing) to "Steppin' Stone" later. Every true "Daydream Believer" and homecoming queen in the sold-out house stayed enraptured through a "Pleasant Valley Sunday" encore. This wasn't Monkeemania, it was Monkee revelry.

A superb eight-piece band propelled the three front-Monkees through two tour de force sets shorter on schtick and longer on songs (more than 40) than previous tours. The music rocked, augmented by big-screen projections of Monkees memorabilia, photos, film and even a TV-commercial break at intermission. For Pete's sake, can you dig it?

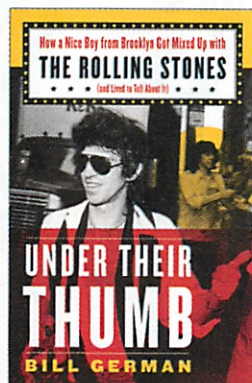
The Monkees are greater than the sum of their parts, even without missing link Mike Nesmith touring. They recorded some of the 20th century's most endearing and enduring songs. That they didn't do it all by themselves is trivial. Neither did Sinatra, Elvis or even the Beatles. "Whatever happened to them?" Micky joked about "the four kings of EMI" while introducing "Randy Scouse Git." That they're still doing it, live and well, is marvelous.

DENNIS MCDONOUGH

Bill German *Under Their Thumb* (VILLARD)

New York seventh-grader nabs big sister's records, becomes enthralled with the Rolling Stones, commandeers the school's mimeo machine, prints up a little newsletter and...fast forward, but not much...winds up flying around the world, hanging with the Stones before his senior year.

Schoolboy German started an insider rag (he would agree with that term) called *Beggars Banquet*, about the Rolling Stones. Forty years later, what he reported became tweeting. At the time,



the Stones spent much of their time in New York City where an underage German didn't need to drive or drink to follow and report their every move, which he did. Eventually German was taken into the band's larger circle, and his account of the inner workings of the Stones' organization, how access is dispensed, tracks covered at hotels, unsavory hangers-on brought in and shut out and the nuances of after-parties can be fascinating.

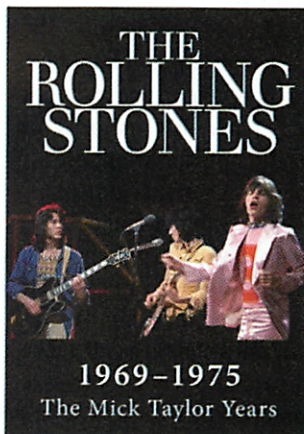
Burned out by 30, German found getting out could prove to be as difficult as

getting in, and his tale of the next couple of years becomes a cautionary tale of unrequited love for a band.

1969-1974— *The Mick Taylor Years DVD* (SEXY INTELLECTUAL)

The supremely talented Mick Taylor, who contributed to what are arguably the Rolling Stones' finest years, replaced the Stones' ill-fated co-founder, Brian Jones. Just released from John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, Taylor, young and eager to please, was thrust into the maelstrom from which *Let It Bleed*, *Sticky Fingers* and *Exile on Main St.* emerged. Unlike the albums he contributed to, Taylor did not fare well. For the fan and viewer who's looking for rich dirt or tiny nuggets of new information about Taylor, this DVD covers the entire band during those years without centering on the guy who quit the Rolling Stones.

This story really begins with the first concert Taylor played as a Rolling Stone, an event which turned out to be a memorial for Jones, who had died in a suspicious drowning only two days



before. Taylor began traveling with drugs, adultery, tax exile, dubious "friends" and associates, manipulation, booze, rootlessness, heavenly concerts and concerts gone to Hell—you know, the usual Rolling Stones baggage—and after five years, he'd had enough. I wish the film had shown more of Taylor's perspective, but that said, those five years provided quite a ride, and the other members' stories, told in the same detail as Taylor's, add up to some very interesting viewing.

Ladies & Gentlemen... *The Rolling Stones DVD* (EAGLE VISION)

Pieced together from four dates in Texas during the 1972 *Exile on Main Street* tour, this film, originally released in theaters in 1974, focuses on Mick Jagger, rarely straying from his admittedly exciting performance. The camera work is dark and the costume changes suggest many more than four shows, but it's still hard to screw up 14 songs by the Stones.

The most interesting section contains the rehearsal bonus scenes, where we see that what the Stones do is their job. Jagger tries to pump himself up, Richards works through songs while smoking; the small grimaces and micro-expressions tell it all. In a 2010 interview, Jagger dissects the shows with disarming candor. It's the bonus tracks here which make the package worthwhile.

Kickin' in your Stall

BY CARL GUSTAFSON

A Prayer for an Angel

A REAL ANGEL WOULD scare the day-lights out of me. The ancient book of Ezekiel describes them as marvelous storm riders moving with magnificent speed and precision, of brilliant aura and breathtaking to behold with their manifold faces and fabulous wingspans. One Order of these wondrous creatures is called Cherubim. Yes, the same name we associate with wee dinky-winged babies with facial cheeks as large as their chubby butt cheeks.

These puissant and spectacular wonders can wage war, bring curses and plagues, haul your ass off like an owl on a field mouse, and—they can sing. In the cryptic phantasmagoria of John the Revelator, we can hear his description of a glorious vast throng like the roar of many waters and crashes of thunder, all choru-sed in tribute to God.

I surmise that this oft-mentioned Biblical testimony to the prowess of song is why we humans say, “She sings like an angel.” This recently has come to be the hallmark of one special and precious person who is the very antithesis of one of these monstrous creatures I have described. But after hearing her, no let’s say, beholding her, we seem to find no higher way to understand her supreme gift to us. As I read her reviews, “angelic” or some form of it, is

profoundly entwined in the fabric of her praises.

She appears incapable of carrying out a plague, or of scaring anyone. Her radiant face is unlined and pure, wide blue eyes framed in Alice of Wonderland fame hair. She stands straight, but demure, the suggestion of curtsy always in her knees. She is a drop of honey in a glimmering spoon with a smile that could jump-start grand warriors to battle in her defense. Hell, I would, and I don’t even know her, because she has a voice that upon first hearing lifts one’s soul beyond our mundane drudgery to a celestial plane. While in her power, we beholders like who we are as a human race and believe, at least for the moment, in our potential. Twelve years ago she wasn’t even on this earth, for Jackie Evancho is only 11.

In her own words she describes a radiant happiness that overwhelms her while she sings. There is no contrivance in her soul, her bright eyes open yet each morning to a sense of wonder and delight. If you haven’t experienced this gifted child, you are probably cynical and thinking, “Yeah, wait until she turns 20, gets a lizard tattoo and marries a punk rocker with spiked bracelets and 17 ear rings shaped like barbed wire pentagrams.



JACKIE EVANCHO BY KEVIN STANTON

Then we’ll have to hear about her drug habit and we’ll all realize the voice that sounded great relative to 12, sounds like just another opera diva wannabe...”

Well then, I offer a prayer for Jackie, because her camp wouldn’t let a gnarled old blues man near her if I came on a camel with three wise men. I pray that this national resource can, by some miracle, stay free of a greedy Svengali, that the precious soul of hers that testifies to the love of world peace and baby seals, as she

told the President of the United States, can grow and radiate with age, unfettered by the appetites, evil, and corruption of mankind that she currently transcends, transforms and then inspires, not just with her voice, but the virtue and ingenuous purity behind it.

She will never lead a normal life, not with her gifts. She will face other trials and tribulations unique to her most certain fame. She’s not an angel after all, but she can open the door for the rest of us, if only a crack, to the sounds of heaven. ©