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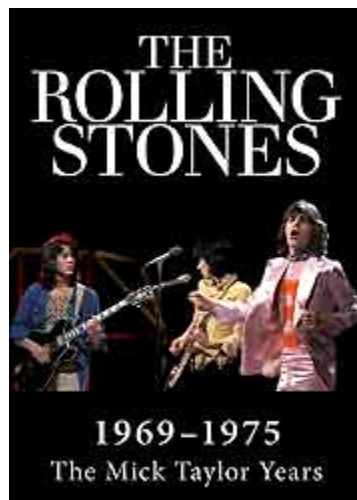
## *The Rolling Stones 1969-1974: The Mick Taylor Years DVD*

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By **Danny R. Phillips**

It would've been easy to make a documentary about The Rolling Stones' golden age (*Let It Bleed*, *Sticky Fingers*, and *Exile on Main Street*) completely flattering and slanted. That is not what the makers of this DVD did.

They recognize glaring mistakes (the two or three albums past *Exile*) as well as acknowledge The Stones' experimentation and expansion into country, due in no small part to the presence of guitarist Mick Taylor (who had just left The Bluesbreakers) and Gram Parsons (The Byrds and The Flying Burrito Brothers) and his own fast friendship with Keith Richards as both drug buddy and musical touchstone.



Besides the kudos, the makers delve into their managerial troubles with the allegedly crooked Alan Klein—"I look at that time as the cost of an education," says Richards at one point; the death of founding member Brian Jones only months after being relieved of his duties in The Stones; and finally, the god awful one-two punch of *Goat's Head Soup* and *It's Only Rock and Roll*, the latter containing the horrific single "Angie."

What makes this one of the best rock examination films is the inclusion of vintage interview footage, the promotional film for "Jumpin' Jack Flash," and several interviews that were actually conducted as history was being made and a band was seemingly falling apart.

Infighting nearly destroyed the band when they were in France recording *Exile*; rarely were the members all playing together in the same room. In fact, Richards did so much of the work himself that many critics call the album Richards' first solo record. Interviews with John Mayall, Robert Greenfield, Barney Hopkyns, and *Village Voice* critic Robert Christgau (quoted as saying how "Moonlight Mile" was "... an absolute learning experience for me"), give the film a voice of credibility that it would otherwise lack.

The biggest thing I came away with from this film with was that Taylor's short five years as a member of The Rolling Stones were crucial in forming the Stones sound that we revere today; inside of being just another British band playing the blues, they were willing to grow, change, and shape the sound that the world would come to know. They moved past adversity (much of which they brought on themselves), loss, missteps, and flat out shitty tunes to release some of their greatest material.

Is it a coincidence that a great virtuoso guitarist with a broad range of interests like Taylor was around at the time when The Rolling Stones put out some of the most flawless rock of all time?

I think not and I'm pleased that *The Rolling Stones 1969-1974: The Mick Taylor Years\** was made so rock historians can shine a brighter light on that fact. This DVD is superb.

*The Mick Taylor Years DVD* was released on July 27 via MVD Visual and Chrome Dreams and can be purchased on [See Of Sound](#).

\*Although the cover says "1975" the actual title of the DVD is "1974."



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