



## MUSIC



## THE SOUNDS OF BLUE

By BOB PUTIGNANO

From the same folks who brought you Eric Clapton "The 1960s Review," follows Clapton's musical journeys throughout the seventies. Featuring new and archive interviews, rare performance footage, contributions from Bonnie Bramlett, Bobby Whitlock, The Albert Brothers, George Terry, Willie Perkins, Bill Halverson, Clapton biographer Marc Roberty, journalist Anthony DeCurtis and others.

The first minutes of the film update viewers with a synopsis of Clapton's work in the sixties, honoring his chops in the Yardbirds and John Mayall's Bluesbreakers before achieving megastar status in Cream. We learn why the Cream super-group was so successful but also why it was so short-lived, Clapton was too bored to continue reworking blues standards into psychedelic hits. Clapton unites with Steve Winwood in a second super-group, which also featured the eccentric Baker on drums. Blind Faith crashed after releasing only one LP. But Clapton became friends with the husband-wife team of Delaney & Bonnie the R&B soul band that opened for Blind Faith via the suggestion of George Harrison.

E.C. was captivated by Delaney Bramlett's singing and songwriting; he utilized Delaney's production skills for Clapton's solo debut for Atco Records. (There are several live video clips of Clapton sitting in with D&B.) Bonnie Bramlett kindly opines that Delaney's guidance and voice lessons immeasurably impacted Eric. Clapton originals like "Easy Now" and "Let It Rain," and two collaborations with Leon Russell ("Blues Power," "Lonesome and a

Long Way from Home,") plus the classic cover of J.J. Cale's "After Midnight."

Bobby Whitlock guides through Clapton's Derek & The Dominoes "Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs." Overwhelmed with the spotlight Clapton also toured with Delaney & Bonnie as a sideman, but when that group spun out Clapton began shopping new tunes with organist Whitlock, bassist Carl Radle, and drummer Jim Gordon at Criteria Studios in Miami. Engineers Ron and Howard Albert explain how Duane Allman joined the sessions (thanks to producer extraordinaire Tom Dowd, Clapton met Duane at an Allman Brothers show) that resulted in the monumental "Layla" sessions.

Other chapters "Dominoes Falling," "Highest Mountain to Lowest Valley," and "In Exile" chronicle the Dominoes' dissolution and Clapton's subsequent hiatus, (1971-74.) Concerned for his friend the Who's Pete Townshend prodded Clapton into playing a star-studded show at London's Rainbow Theater in January, 1973, with Townshend, Steve Winwood and Ronnie Wood assisting.

1974 a heroin-free Eric took to recording again at a rental house in Golden Beach, Fl. "461 Ocean Boulevard" saw E.C. teaming with guitarist George Terry and backup singer Yvonne Elliman on several blues covers. Johnny Otis' ("Willie and The Hand Jive,") and the traditional "Motherless Children." The LP also uncovered Clapton's fondness for the reggae album (Bob Marley's "Burnin'") that featured Eric's popular rework of "I Shot the Sheriff."

## Eric Clapton "The 1970's Review" DVD MVD Entertainment Group [www.ChromeDreams.co.uk](http://www.ChromeDreams.co.uk)

The late '70s saw a Clapton staying on the charts and (finally) marrying George Harrison's ex-wife Pattie Boyd. Terry and others revealed how Clapton traded heroin for alcohol, consuming booze at an alarming rate.

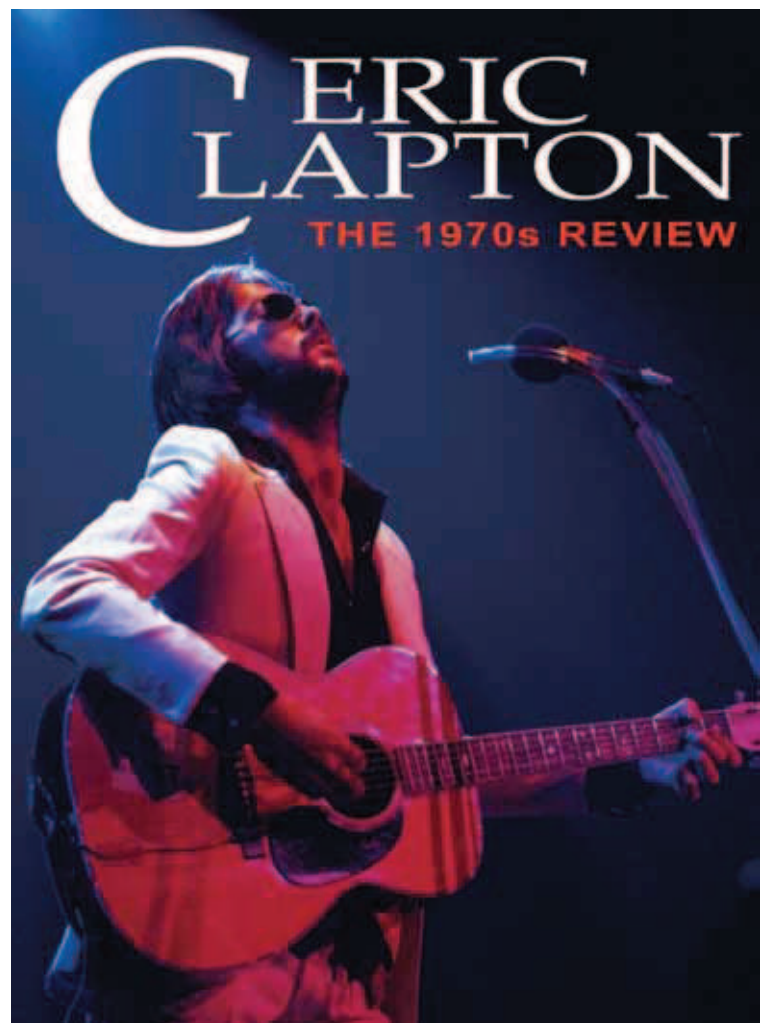
The "extras" are mostly about Bobby Whitlock, plus studio engineers Ron Albert and Howard Albert reflecting on the "Layla" sessions, and producer Tom Dowd, these segments are insightful. The text/narrative contributor's biographies are useful and informative, but the "beyond DVD" portion is just a commercial for the UK based Chromed Dreams. Regrettably there's no booklet inside the packaging.

The seventies depict Clapton's restless, evolving and constant churn of his musical development. Just think about the ground he covered during this (mostly) fruitful segment of his career. Even though near the end of the seventies Eric severs ties to American and Oklahoma bands, and reverts back to playing with an all British band featuring Albert Lee and other UK greats.

You might be overwhelmed by the film's 151 minute running time, but should appreciate the album chronology and painstaking attention to detail. As an avid Clapton fan I found this DVD somewhat lengthy and wondered if it would have been prudent to offer this documentary in two parts. Part one as the early seventies, and another DVD covering Clapton's later seventies.

Note this film is not sanctioned by Eric Clapton. You can watch the trailer at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=fM614NQB3c8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=fM614NQB3c8)

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## MUSIC SCENE

## Starnes and Shah

First Friends, then Musical Partners, Now Partners in Life



By RICH MONETTI

Zilpha Starnes and Dania Abu-Shaheen of White Plains met once briefly when they attended Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville. After Dania graduated in 2004, and needed a roommate, a friend suggested Zilpha to fill out the lease. They would become friends and then musical partners

as the Indie guitar duo, Starnes and Shah. But it was the passing of landmark legislation in New York that truly solidified their collaboration.

Gay marriage legalized, Texas born Zilpha made light of her personal impetus. "I didn't want us to do our taxes twice - once we didn't have to do that, I figured why not," joked Zilpha.

Certainly pulling for a nationwide

extension of marriage rights, the couple seems no different in the face of the many injustices that frustrate and perplex us all - simply doing what they can to get by themselves. "We're not activists, we're just married," says Zilpha, who married her Lebanese born partner in 2013.

They aren't at the point where young girls from Texas or the Middle East are reaching out for advice, support and strength. "When we get that big," says Dania, "we'll let you know."

Of course, both are grateful that their families have been nothing but accepting, and the same goes for the New York area

they live in. That has just left the music - *Shilling for Dreamtown* being their latest

Dania started out at a young age singing along to the car radio and playing the piano. Drums then seemed like her musical destination until she took up the bass and realized she wanted to write songs. Dania eventually graduated to the guitar, played in little high school bands, and after coming to the states for college in 2000, played the acoustic singer/songwriter coffeehouse circuit around Sarah Lawrence.

A few years behind and absent any discernible twang, Zilpha's strum also began at the piano and included singing in the choir

and harmonizing with her older sister. But bringing her amateur interest to a professional level had no relation to penning notes to a page like her cohort. "Oh wow, you can be up onstage, in a band, I was like - great," she says. "That was the attraction."

The inspiration established, Starnes rode it to a more formal education. "She has a background in musical theory," says Dania, "while I'm more self-taught."

As such, they put the differences to good use when other musicians come into the fold. "I can't read music but luckily I have Zilpha who can translate my work into the

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