

Elvis Costello & Allen Toussaint

★★★★★

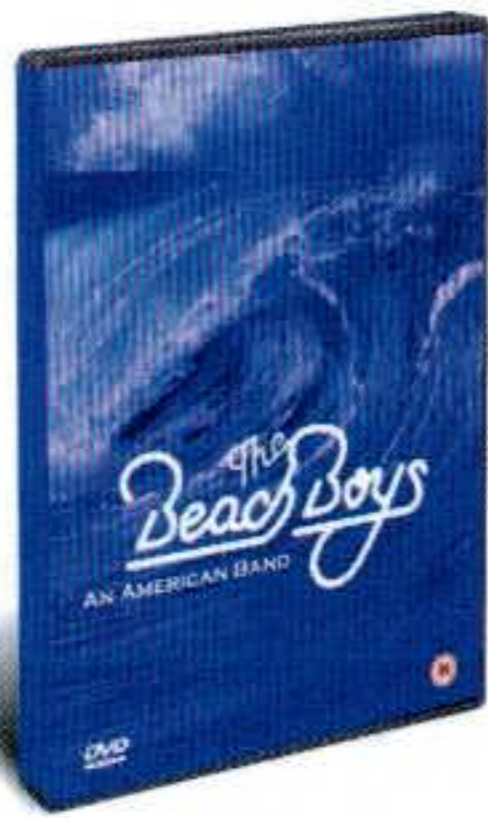
Hot As A Pistol,
Keen As A Blade

HIP-O

An exceptional collaboration, long overdue.

After Hurricane Katrina, Elvis Costello and Allen Toussaint, who'd first worked together in the '80s, combined again to record the inspired *The River In Reverse*, leading to a North American tour, which in turn has led to this stunning concert DVD. The performance in Montreal captured here found the two musicians' bands and the co-headliners' styles assimilating seamlessly, with Toussaint not only providing juicy piano licks but rearranging Costello staples from Pump It Up to Deep Dark Truthful Mirror for the occasion. The give and take is breath-takingly sweet (case in point: Costello's raging take on Fortune Teller). Although Toussaint is largely relegated to the role of sideman for much of the show, his solo piano medley of classic New Orleans tunes and vocal turns on his own Yes We Can Can and A Certain Girl are really special.

Jeff Tamarkin



this is an insightful, even-handed documentary covering the band's first two decades in an hour and 45 minutes. The path it takes veers, like a drunk on a sailboat, from frank interviews to stagey monologues, fly-on-the-wall footage to the bizarre – like Brian talking about his recording techniques while lying, topless and obese, in a baronial four-poster bed, where he's visited by the 'Surf Police'. But the real clincher is the musical footage: 42 songs performed anywhere from a Czech nightclub to Central Park and (best and most frequently) on old TV shows: a glorious mash of kitsch and genius, the band, clad in several variations of striped shirt, flanked by bikinied girls and screaming fans.

Sylvie Simmons

The Beach Boys

★★★★★

An American Band

LIBERATION ENTERTAINMENT

Stellar song-packed, footage-filled doc, originally made in 1982.

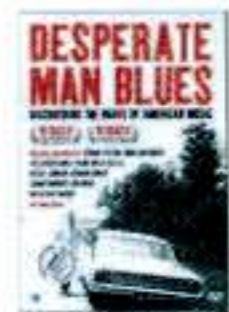
It's a sad testament to music repackaging – not to mention the usurping of their name by one revisionist member – that anything titled 'The Beach Boys' needs approaching with the utmost care. But, surprise,

Desperate Man Blues

★★★★★

DUST TO DIGITAL

The profile of a record collecting obsessive.



Joe Bussard does not believe that very much at all in the way of jazz happened after 1932 and won't even eat in places that

pipe contemporary music. His is the world of the 78 rpm recording, ideally on such early blues labels as Paramount and Black Patti. For over 50 years he's been searching them out in remote areas of America's south, covering some two million miles in order to find the 25,000 obscure blues, country and jazz discs that form his collection. A cigar-chomping and opinionated figure, he's now regarded as a cultural czar, one who has preserved a musical heritage from being dumped on a rubbish-heap. And though Bussard casually mentions that one of the records is worth \$50,000, it's obvious that money really has no part to play in his reckoning, just the joy of being able to reprise music by Jimmie Rodgers, his great original hero, and theoretically strum along with the likes of Charley Patton, Uncle Dave Macon and the early washboard bands.

Fred Dellar

The Make Up

★★★★★

In Film/On Video

DISCHORD

The Make Up's gospel yeh-yeh sound caught on film.

Evolving from Washington DC hardcore uproar pin-ups The Nation Of Ulysses, The Make Up had all the best moves, all the best lines. They adopted cool co-ordinated outfits and revolutionary Marxist maxims during a very staid and safe '90s. Here, incendiary live shows find singer Ian Svenonius making out like a possessed James Brown, while the rest kick up a sanctified squall. The DVD also features a reprise of the group's Blue Is Beautiful *cine-vérité* film short from 1998 in which the grup

DVD EXTRA

BY CLIVE PRIOR, FRED DELLAR, JEFF TAMARKIN AND LOIS WILSON

What We Want, What We Believe

★★★★★ AK PRESS



Founded in 1967 by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, and armed with Malcolm X's teachings, the Black Panther Party politicised communities in their fight for equal rights in racist America. Their influence was paramount; no more so than on soul and funk, where their 10 point programme helped James Brown graduate from America My Home to Say It Loud, I'm Black And I'm Proud. LW

The Style Council

★★

Live At The Full House Rock Show

ARD VIDEO

Baffling. Of all the footage out there, ARD VIDEO releases a 37-minute German TV date from March 1987 of the band's awkward renditions of Shout To The Top, Homebreakers and more from a brightly lit studio then tag on a five minute interview conducted by host Alan Bangs. CP

Johnny Cash

★★★★

Cash In Ireland

UNIVERSAL

Routine performance featuring Cash's family show, shot for Irish TV at a Dublin concert in 1991. June and John Carter Cash, plus Kris Kristofferson,

guest along with the remnants of The Carter Family. Pleasant enough 50 minutes viewing, with re-runs of expected hits. Things really spark when Cash straps on his guitar to recall early glories with Get Rhythm and Folsom Prison Blues. FD

Jazzin' The Black Forest

★★★★★ MONITORPOP



Hans Georg Brunner-Schwer's MPS label, founded in the '60s and based in Villingen, Germany released 700 records by artists ranging from Jean-Luc Ponty and George Duke to Monty Alexander and Oscar Peterson. This fine tribute has interviews with the main players and thrilling archive footage that includes Peterson and trio serenading Brunner-Schwer's household. LW

NRBQ

★★★★

Derbytown: Live 1982

MVD

Equal parts genius and insanity, one of America's greatest-ever live bands and one of its best-kept secrets, NRBQ was typically fired up at this 1982 Kentucky gig. Augmented by the Whole Wheat Horns, the band jumps from scorching rockabilly and blues to sweet pop and the unclassifiable. Amateurish video quality, classic show. JT

strives to escape from the US capitalist conspiracy via a secret underground network. It's part Monkees goofing, and part Godard's Alphaville. A bonus commentary version is indispensable for an insight into the group's thinking. But it's that live footage you need. The Make Up thought the world was against them. Now you can see why.

Kevin Pearce

Various

★★★★

The Best Of Hootenanny

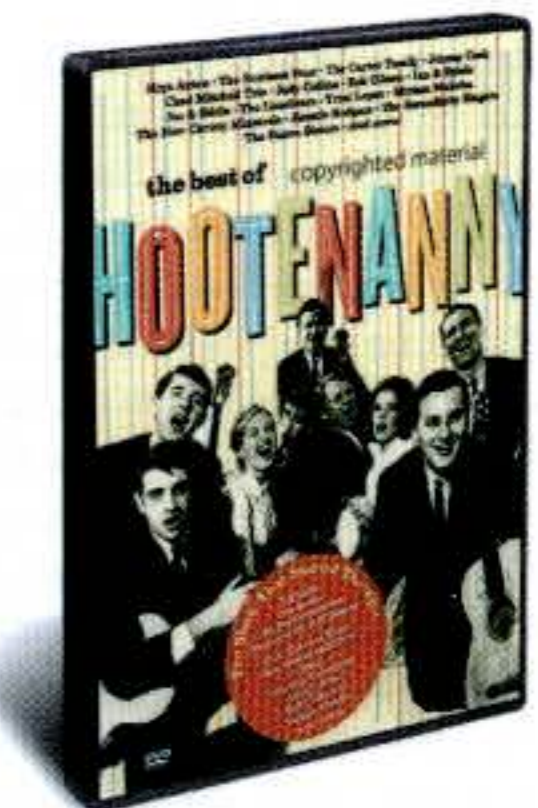
SHOUT FACTORY

Three-disc box featuring "the best" of the US TV series that celebrated folk.

The 1963-64 series of Hootenanny concentrated on the exploding folk music scene, although most of the movement's biggest icons never appeared on the show, not surprising given that the producers demanded loyalty oaths! Nevertheless, some formidable talent is on these kinescopes, including The Carter Family and young incarnations of Johnny Cash,

Carly Simon, Woody Allen and Hoyt Axton. Alas, in the wake of A Mighty Wind, the enthusiasm is sometimes hard to take; John Phillips singing, with a big showbiz grin, about Stackolee going to the gallows is just one disconcerting example. Interestingly, the two most riveting performances are the only actual hits of the era – The New Christy Minstrels' Green, Green and Trini Lopez's If I Had A Hammer, both close enough to rock'n'roll, and foreshadowing the British Invasion that would soon knock everything on its head.

Bill Holdship



Wot, no bikinied girls? Early Beach Boys under the watchful eye of Murry Wilson.