

Gravity Walks

CHUCK PROPHET ON VALLEY FEVER: GREEN ON RED LIVE AT THE RIALTO



JUST OVER A YEAR AGO, GREEN ON RED, the seminal 1980s Paisley Underground/alt-country/roots rock/whatever band, reconvened at Tucson's Rialto Theater to celebrate Hotel Congress' 20th anniversary as well as pay tribute to their fallen drummer, Alex MacNicol. The 16-song set was initially burdened by the band's don't-wanna-talk-about-it baggage, but shortly got to cookin'—and soon singer-songwriter-guitarist Dan Stuart's jokes got better and the four remaining members smiled, sweated and played like it was 1985 all over again. Guitarist Chuck Prophet discussed the event with *Harp*.

Shall we speak of Green on Red's "sloppy brilliance?"

Some people thought we were the saviors of rock 'n' roll, and a lot of other people thought we were pathetic. I think they were both right.

There is kind of a *Wild Bunch* element to Green on Red. But there's safety in numbers. We're all tight enough to just embrace the sloppiness when it happens, you know. Before we played the show, we went to London and rescheduled a show that was meant to be the last show of our tour, before we basically imploded. We had a huddle backstage and Dan said, "Okay, we're old. We know what to do."

Takes a big man to admit that.

Seriously, there were times when it meandered into brilliance and when it was pathetic.

Where were you brilliant and where were you pathetic?

Anybody that learned five cowboy chords at Catholic youth camp could probably play any of [Green on Red's] songs. At the same time, there was something about the collective thing that happened when we all played together. But, you know, to be honest, there's really not a lot of things I want to revisit from 18 years ago. We had to do the reunion because we all know things about each other that we don't want anyone to know.

You've been through a lot with these guys.

In the four years that we were really active toward the end, it was like we were running on the same nine-volt battery; things got pretty dim. We were all pretty dispirited and it got pretty unfriendly. But it didn't take long to stand back and squint and remember the good stuff.

So will you play the Hotel Congress festival every year?

I think somebody started that rumor, in the "If you book it they will come" spirit, but we don't wanna revisit that. Even though it had been a short time that we'd all been communicating, it didn't take long before we started bristling at each other's emails, I'll tell you that.

So—how hard did you have to squint to see the good stuff?

Gee, Dr. Phil, I don't know. Whatever it is, I guess we're still workin' through it. One thing I was thinking about today was how things have changed in the music business. One thing was, when we were touring around, our version of really making it was to have a gas card. And we had a gas card; we could fill up the van. In that way, we made it.

We get along creatively as humans, I think. There's a certain brotherhood to Green on Red, but I think for the uninitiated, if they were to see us all together, somebody didn't know us might think, "Gee, those guys don't seem to like each other very much."

RANDY HARWARD



The Pixies Acoustic: Live in Newport

(EAGLE VISION, +/- 101 MINUTES)

Only in it for the money



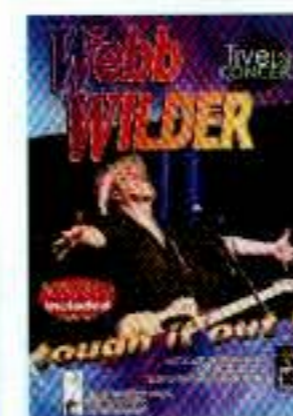
If there was any residual doubt among Pixies fans that their beloved band's recommendation was bereft of bile, just check out the stink-key Frank Black tosses at drummer David Lovering when their fearless leader is caught on a different page than his bandmates. "I think we were jamming," Lovering quips, referencing a strange heckle-plea from earlier in the show. Although Black rolled with the original interruption, Lovering's joke garnered a cool, though steamy, sidelong glance. Kinda makes you wonder just how much longer this Pixies thing will go on. I mean, come on—this is like the fourth DVD in the last three years, and the most recent one was called *Sell Out*. And this latest release is filmed at the place where Dylan heretically plugged in at a traditionally acoustic forum. The idea, one supposes, is to hammer home the point that the Pixies' alt-rock, rendered acoustically with extra cowboy chords, is really just great folk music. Duh, we know. It's still pretty good, though, so best wishes for a continued reunion, or at least another DVD.

Special features: A featurette to underscore, reiterate and...yeah, whatever.

Webb Wilder Tough It Out!

(LANDSLIDE, +/- 72 MINUTES)

Roots-rock's resident cornball at his goofy best



The definitive concert video of the electrifying artist himself," trumpets the cover blurb, released hot on the heels of Wilder's long-awaited studio album, *About Time*. With that album, a new-ish band (the Beatnecks), some same ol' and spankin' fresh quirky-cool roots-rock corks—not to mention longtime producer/svengali R.S. Field—Wilder seems to have reclaimed his title and reasserted his status as roots rock's resident weirdo. *Tough It Out!* is straight forward, no frills visual evidence, filmed *Austin City Limits*-style (i.e. absolutely no gloss) and submitted with semideadpan

goofiness akin to that of Wilder's private-eye character in *Corn Flicks*. 'Cept it's not just a goof: Wilder and the 'Necks kick 'em out for a good 72 minutes, welding Allman Brothers grit to Ronnie Dawson/Tony Joe White hybrid cool. And unlike the Neil Hamburger DVD, there's no need to tough this one out.

Special features: The accompanying CD soundtrack is resequenced for that "I haven't seen this particular set" feeling. The "Memorabilia" section (read: photo gallery) has some amusing pics of Wilder as a hippie—and really cool poster art. There's also a nice, concise documentary.



Neil Hamburger The World's Funnyman

(DRAG CITY, +/- 90 MINUTES)

Is it comedy? Is it art? What the fuck is it?!!



You have to really appreciate—we mean *really* appreciate—Neil Hamburger's shtick to endure a full set. No matter how dead-on his portrayal of a down-on-his-luck, lame-ass, hapless lounge comic, more than ten minutes of the guy is enough to reduce you to a feral, drooling, toe-chewing, feces-tossing animal. However, if you can sit back and take the main program's (*That's Not Gold, That's Dung!*) onslaught of wanton hackery—both (intentionally) comedic and throaty—and clinically spilled drinks, drawing parallels to half the 'tards you see on *Def Comedy Jam*,