

# VITAL *Viewing*



## SON VOLT *Live: 6 String Belief*

● Legacy

"As you probably noticed, this is being filmed, so if anything gets screwed up, we'll probably do it again later," quips a stoic Jay Farrar a few songs into this set, filmed in high-definition last September at Asheville, NC's acoustically-perfect Orange Peel. A real marathon piece with 31 songs and no set break, the catch is that Farrar's body of work, especially when taken at once with his patented blasé delivery, is more grating than a reward for fans. In fact, the caveat "for hardcore fans only" becomes a downright requirement for this DVD, as Farrar tortures his fans (and new bandmates, it seems) through the relatively droll material from 2005's *Okemah and the Melody of Riot* and his solo career before getting to the meat of the set with infinitely more rousing numbers from earlier Son Volt albums like *Trace* and *Straightaways*. But by then, it's a little late. ★ *Andy Stokes*



## THE VELEVEET UNDERGROUND *Under Review* ●

Sexy Intellectual

When the fan-edited wikimentary craze hits in, oh, 2011, Sexy Intellectual's unauthorized *Under Review* series will make fine fodder for even-more-unauthorized completion by the diehards. Their entries for cult bandleader Captain Beefheart and proto-everything quartet The Velvet Underground are each a half-dozen key interviews short of definitive, but each remains thorough, surprising and *almost* satisfying for nerds.

While co-founders Lou Reed and John Cale are missing from their Velvets' doc, drummer Maureen Tucker and Cale replacement Doug Yule are present and illuminating (as are plenty of authoritative British talking heads, a hallmark of the U.K.-based series). Likewise, the makers thankfully licensed plenty of music

and vintage footage from the Velvets' half-decade run, including a stunning acoustic rendition of "Heroin" that it sure would've been nice to have as a complete extra.

Without participation from the Captain himself, who retired from music to create abstract art in 1982, his story remains very much a guessing game. Longtime skinman John "Drumbo" French and other Magic Band alum provide musical insight about the former Don Van Vliet's vision of a blues/free-jazz hybrid (though various psychological speculations about the Captain seem fruitless). Concert footage abounds. YouTube.com users will surely unearth more interviews with Beefheart, Reed and others soon. Get editing. ★ *Jesse Jarnow*



## LOOK AT ALL THE LOVE WE'VE FOUND: A TRIBUTE TO SUBLIME ●

MVD

Last October, a number of artists got together to pay respect to one of southern California's great musical losses—Brad Nowell and Sublime. Though the tribute ends with the requisite full-stage jam session of the evening's performers ("Santeria," "What I Got"), it's the single band takes that offer the best tributes. Fishbone's blistering send up of "Date Rape" infuses it with even more manic energy while longtime Sublime pals The Ziggens triumph with a meaty "Paddle Out." Los Lobos and Sublime's Eric Wilson make "Pawn Shop" their own, ripping guitar solos through it while still keeping the reggae-grit intact. And its perhaps Unwritten Law's segue from "Saw Red" to its own "Save Me" that's the most poignant, the latter reflecting the late Nowell's own claustrophobic state of addiction, love and music. Long Beach Shortbus, Blackalicious, Ozomatli and others are also included in addition to a bonus CD featuring further covers from artists like Mishka, Chuck D., Mystic Roots and Bedouin Soundclash. ★ *Josh Baron*



## LET'S ROCK AGAIN! *Directed By Dickie Rude*

● Image Entertainment

Ex-Clash frontman Joe Strummer is sweet, hilarious and—as always—inspiring in this telling documentary, which mostly follows the late singer on his last tour. He's sweet while sitting on a sidewalk talking with teen fans, telling them to "never give up," hilarious while passing out hand-written fliers to his Atlantic City gig, sadly and somewhat shockingly going unnoticed. And he's inspiring in interviews and egoless conversation. But nothing's quite as valuable as when he shows up on the doorstep of a robotic Jersey radio station, where he's greeted by a clueless disc-jockey who, obviously knowing nothing about The Clash, looks him up in All Music Guide. There's profundity here, but you have to read between the lines to get it. *Essential* for Clash fans. ★ *Wes Orshoski*

## LEE "SCRATCH" PERRY IN CONCERT: THE ULTIMATE ALIEN *Directed by Dave Meehan* ● Secret

Films/MVD

Forever the superfreak, Scratch is of course Scratch here: deeply unusual and eccentric in mannerisms, rhymes and appearance. And of course, that's at least half the appeal of this 2002 Brighton, England, show, featuring "People Funny Boy," "Doctor Dick" and seven other tracks. Coming out in a crown and cape and holding a scepter, Scratch, who is pushing 70 here, loses steam about halfway through this so-so set, no thanks to a costume change (he returns as Superman!). His all-white backing band tries hard enough, but in the end comes off rather soulless and rigid. Hypnotic and effortlessly funky early into the show, the dub creator is maybe more fascinating during the important, if sometimes hard-to-follow bonus interview, exploring his work at both Studio One and The Black Ark, and with The Wailers, Joe Gibbs and Coxsone Dodd. ★ *Wes Orshoski*