



## **Blood Sweat & Tears – Spinning Wheel DVD**

Originally the brain-child of legendary producer Al Kooper, Blood Sweat & Tears was the ultimate American jazz-rock outfit, despite Kooper's departure after only one album in 1969.

Of course front man David Clayton-Thomas would take over the reigns as the singer, and drive the band to multi-platinum success throughout the late 60's and 70's.

The newly released DVD Spinning Wheel, features concert film footage from one of the last incarnations of the band, performing in Halifax, UK in April of 1980. The concert was the last in a 10-day tour of England for Blood Sweat and Tears and the funk-rock outfit War.

Clayton-Thomas had just reformed the band and released a new album titled Nuclear Blues, however none of the original band members were involved in the project.

The line-up for this show consisted of Clayton-Thomas, Richard Martinez, David Piltch, Keith Seymour, Robert Economou, Stanley Cassidy and Vernon Dorget, and it can be said that the musicianship here is stellar, no doubt bringing justice to the original music.

By this time, the band was heavily influenced by jazz, and were one of the first <sup>3</sup>rock bands<sup>2</sup> to really bring the jazz element back into the forefront of popular music in the 70's, fusing their horn-laden instrumentals with heavy blues and rock elements.

Although the only song performed (<sup>3</sup>Overture<sup>2</sup>) from the classic first album Child Is Father To The Man opened the show, Clayton Thomas leads the band through several exhilarating numbers that truly show the virtuosity of the musicians including the album title track <sup>3</sup>Nuclear Blues<sup>2</sup> and <sup>3</sup>Spanish Wine<sup>2</sup>, which offers a pristine combination of Piltch's Spanish guitar and a double threat horn section that melds into an extended jam.

Other interesting tracks come from the covers of Billie Holliday's <sup>3</sup>God Bless The Child<sup>2</sup> and Jimi Hendrix's <sup>3</sup>Manic Depression<sup>2</sup>, although the latter track abruptly ends at shows<sup>1</sup> end.

The production values (audio and visual) are dark and murky, yet it somehow adds to the <sup>3</sup>classic<sup>2</sup> appeal of remembering the good ole<sup>1</sup> days or rock and roll.

If there is one let down however, it would have to be the all too short medley of the bands<sup>1</sup> biggest songs; <sup>3</sup>And When I Die<sup>2</sup>, <sup>3</sup>Spinning Wheel<sup>2</sup> and <sup>3</sup>YouCEve Made Me So Very Happy<sup>2</sup>.

Despite these minor short comings, Spinning Wheel is a fun trip down memory lane and a must for true fans of the original jazzrock band from days gone by.

- Joe Milliken