

Concert Strings

Ronnie Earl & The Broadcasters: *Hope Radio* (Stony Plain 1324; 78:23) ★★★½ On 11 original instrumentals introduced to a small studio audience, Earl uses the healthful properties of blues guitar to neutralize and maybe even reverse the debilitating effects of his physical and psychiatric issues. Earl may have little to offer by way of innovation—his allegiance to Chicagoans Otis Rush and Magic Sam never wanes—but his deeply personal process of squeezing out taut, precise notes during many slow passages makes for riveting listening. Quicken the tempo and he sounds more dutiful than inspired.

Ordering info: stonyplainrecords.com

Larry Carlton: *Live In Tokyo* (335 Records 0307; 64:06) ★★★½ While not engaged in a blues concert per se, master technicians Carlton and Robben Ford—friends since working with Joni Mitchell in the mid-'70s—seem entirely true in mind and spirit to the blues. They take their time telling poignant, nuanced stories on Carlton's "Cold Cold" and Ford's "Derrick's Blues." A fire is lit under the J.B. Lenoir blues "Talk To Your Daughter." Their skilled pop-jazz accompanists, however, have little feel for roots music.

Ordering info: 335records.com

Stevie Ray Vaughan: *Pride And Joy* (Epic/Legacy 88697; 70:00) ★★★½ This is the place to go for Vaughan on film. The original treasury of eight promo clips (from 1983-'89), released not long after the guitarist's death in 1990, now resurfaces with added material, including three virtuosic solo acoustic guitar romps first aired on MTV, two laughably serious TV ads for records and worthwhile interview-and-studio footage centered around Stevie and his brother Jimmie's *Family Style* dance album.

Ordering info: legacyrecordings.com

Buddy Guy/Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown/Bobby Parker: *Blues At Montreux 2004* (Eagle Eye 39127; 238:00) ★★★ With their respective approximately 75-minute sets getting a DVD apiece, VIP guitarists Parker, Brown and Guy all excel at wreaking a joyful vengeance upon everyone in the Montreux Jazz Festival's Stravinski Auditorium on this memorable night. Parker even stings "Straight, No Chaser." Guy warms up on solo acoustic before plugging in with his crackerjack



Stevie Ray Vaughan: film moments

band. Brown is one of a kind. Pentatonic blues bends galore also come from host Carlos Santana, on two jam-session tracks and nine numbers in the headliners' sets.

Ordering info: eaglerockent.com

Koerner, Ray & Glover: *Blues, Rags & Hollers* (MVD Visual DM0509D; 118:00) ★★★½ The preeminent white bluesmen of the folk 1960s—Minneapolis string pickers Dave "Snaker" Ray and "Spider" John Koerner, and Tony "Little Sun" Glover on harmonica—have their collective and individual stories told during this engaging if slightly overlong 1986 documentary, written and co-directed by Glover without a dime of grant money. In concert segments and interviews, the three musicians reveal themselves to be free spirits hip to the zeitgeist of the time. Celluloid postscripts update Koerner and Glover's activities to 2007, and Ray until his dying day in 2002.

Ordering info: mvdb2b.com

Various Artists: *Live At The Boston Blues Festival, Volume II* (Blues Trust 1002; 73:03) ★★★ Greg Sarni's annual free late-summer gala alongside the Charles River succeeds with the blanket-and-cooler crowd for its program of internationally known blues elders and midlifers mixed with local musicians. Covering 2000 to '05, the present collection shows that graybeards like Honeyboy Edwards, Lazy Lester and Chick Willis haven't spent all of their emotional capital, and that Duke Robillard and Anson Funderburgh do know how to let it rip with exemplary guitar. Fortunate to be in such company are four Boston bands, among them that of vocalist/guitarist Lydia Warren. **DB**

Ordering info: blustrust.com



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