

EMERSON, LAKE AND PALMER

Beyond the Beginning ★★★

[SANCTUARY]

Two-DVD set offers feast of wide-eyed spectacle and musical bombast

It's fitting that one of the biggest, most bombastic bands of the '70s should require two long DVDs to celebrate its accomplishments. This mammoth, four-plus-hour collection features a documentary outlining the band's history, a couple dozen concert performances from the 1970s, and the complete California Jam show from 1974. Most disturbingly, a feature on ELP cover art finds the common ground between the artists and those who sat behind the Spinal Tap drum kit (it tends to be a short-lived gig). The Spinal Tap comparisons don't end there; listening to Keith Emerson and Greg Lake pontificate about the band's legacy unintentionally recalls the hilarity of Rob Reiner's comedy. But the music remains thrillingly over the top, and for hardcore fans these performances will go to 11. *Andy Whitman*

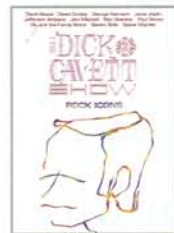
VARIOUS ARTISTS

The Dick Cavett Show:

Rock Icons [SHOUT! FACTORY]

An oh-so-sweet trip to groovier talk-show times

Everything about this winning set is smart and engaging, from content to execution. Even though it's positioned as a collection of music performances from one of the all-time-great talk shows, the producers were wise enough to leave the originally aired episodes intact rather than excise the jams. In that way it serves as something of a time capsule locked up since the early '70s. Now the viewer can enjoy Stevie Wonder ripping through "Signed, Sealed, Delivered" in the company of Tex Ritter and actor Alain Delon, or enjoy Sly Stone's hip ramblings with Cavett, Pancho Gzales, Debbie Reynolds and Senator and Mrs. Fred Harris. The music styles are also fairly eclectic, boasting Ravi Shankar, Paul Simon and the classic post-Woodstock show



with Joni Mitchell, Jefferson Airplane and CS&N. At the center of it all is Cavett's unaffected charm and wit, which allowed him to win his guests' trust, and still shines on the new video commentary. *Tim Sheridan*

BEULAH

A Good Band Is Easy to Kill

[FURTHER DOWN FILMS]

Tour documentary captures the last days of sadly overlooked indie rockers

Though it seemed like more of a threat than a stipulation, when Beulah released 2003's *Yoko* with the caveat that they'd disband if it didn't sell at least 500,000 copies, they should've been taken seriously. Presenting the San Francisco five-piece at the crossroads of their dissolution, *A Good Band Is Easy to Kill* unsparingly catalogs Beulah's final tour, logging 8,000 miles and 29 shows with one of indie rock's best-kept secrets.

It's quite possible no other film has so accurately captured the decidedly unglamorous life of a struggling underground band, as director Charles Norris centers on charismatic lead vocalist/songwriter Miles Kurosky as he haggles with promoters to book shows, loads and unloads the van every night, and fights flat tires and customs officers, trying to keep the tour out of the red.

Despite the band members growing noticeably more haggard as the tour wears on, rallying their strength and fighting illness to give their audience the best show possible, a disarming (and, in retrospect, bittersweet) optimism runs through the proceedings, as the band seems convinced that its big break could be waiting at the next tour stop. *Matt Fink*



BEULAH PHOTO COURTESY OF PETER ELLENBY

JAMIE OLDAKER'S MAD DOGS & OKIES

OLD DOGS... NEW TRICKS

Sometime last year, journeyman drummer Jamie Oldaker invited some of his friends to jam. Turned out to be quite a party. Lucky for us, they decided to make it a record.

RAY BENSON

BONNIE BRAMLETT

J.J. CALE

ERIC CLAPTON

PETER FRAMPTON

VINCE GILL

WILEY HUNT

JOE & ELLEN

TAJ MAHAL

WILLIE NELSON

STEVE PRYOR

WILLIS ALAN RAMSEY

TONY JOE WHITE

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