



BREAKDOWN

Ric Ocasek on his DVD monument to the Cars.

"I JUST HAD THE REALIZATION," says Ric Ocasek, "that at that time, video cameras were barely even out."

It was 1979 going on 1987, a year into the Cars' rise to FM radio supremacy, and the band had purchased a camera hoping to analyze their performances like football teams scrutinize scrimmages. Sounds just like those pokerfaced, robotic rockers that never moved, never smiled onstage. But the fruit of the fat, now-antiquated camera's loins, *The Cars Unlocked*, shows another side of the band hitherto unseen.

"It ended up being just a fun way to document what was going on," Ocasek recalls. "It was really just me sneaking around and getting pictures. I think it was [drummer] David Robinson that made the comment in the video, 'I don't think everybody appreciates you always filming everything we do back here.' But he laughs about that now, and I guess it's a good thing we did that."

Ocasek calls it "a really personal, inside look at the group." True to this, the Cars are shown in different light than usual. They banter with reporters, even playfight with each other. (The scene where typically solemn-looking Ocasek playfully attacks late bassist Ben Orr is priceless.) The rare live performances also serve as a valuable document of a band many never got to see live—and likely never will.

Does 30 years feel as long as it sounds?

It hardly feels like that at all. Is it really? It might be more like 25. Couldn't we cut, like, five off of that?

I think you're right, though. From the inception of the band, '78 or '77, darn...thirty years.

We've all gone through photo albums, but this was such a huge portion of your life—and it's on video.

Certainly it was all kinds of emotions and memories. It was like something that was left for a long time and I had to revisit it all. That's why it didn't seem like thirty years when I was doing it. I was looking to make sure that I maintained the philosophical aspects of the Cars, artistically, how they felt.

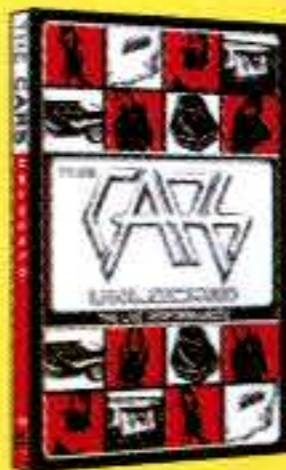
It's good to see that playful side of the band. Do you feel like people ever really knew the Cars?

Some press people that got in at the beginning and hung with the band probably knew [us], but I don't think people did because, obviously on stage, we weren't very open to the audience. We loved the audience, but we didn't want to prod them to react to the music. People used to criticize us for not moving, but as far as I was concerned, that was the best way to go.

There are moments in the performances where you guys seemed to start feeling it, and maybe held back.

I don't know that it was held back, but we weren't out there yellin', "Let me hear you say yeah!" I've never seen Dylan or the Velvet Underground doing that. Or the Killers. It's a way to present the music. It was different, for the time. We didn't want to be fake about it.

RANDY HARWARD



off smoking weed for life. They're not all cookie-cutter caricatures—lots of them don't get high, don't (totally) believe their dreads are magic, etc. And that's the prevailing ethos behind *Dreadheads*: that we attempt to understand the subculture and its adherents, be they flat-out bonkers or oddly reasonable. And by the end of this documentary, the latter group has you craving their itinerant, checked-out lifestyle. Few expenses, little responsibility, constant party and/or buzz. Sounds pretty cool. Except the idiot dancing. And the unshaven females. That's just retarded.

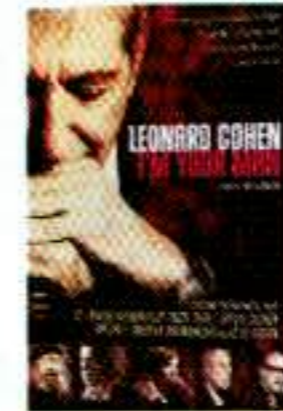
Special features: Contact high. (Unsubstantiated at press time.)



Leonard Cohen I'm Your Man

(LIONS GATE, +/- 104 MINUTES)

Damned straight he is...



Maybe it's the man himself, but it's a very morose prospect, considering an attempt to complement Leonard Cohen's unmatched

eloquence with anything approximating the same. No man alone is equal to the task, and it took a cadre of his creative peers and progeny (Nick Cave, Beth Orton, the Handsome Family, U2, Antony), at the guidance of filmmaker Lian Lunson (*Willie Nelson Down Home*) and artistic director Hal Willner (producer of albums by Marianne Faithful, William S. Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg), to properly pay tribute to Cohen's near-four decade career as a poet, author and songwriter. While this supremely talented cast offers largely stellar renditions of Cohen songs, not to mention copious praise, they pale compared to Cohen himself. He speaks of his own work simply, almost clinically, killing you with his incredible modesty and utter willingness to reveal the secrets behind his body of work. Cohen is a true star throughout, not only towering over his songs but also

inhabiting them completely.

Special features: Unseen musical performances, director commentary, deleted scenes.

NRBQ and the Whole Wheat Horns

Derbytown: Live 1982

(MUSIC VIDEO DISTRIBUTORS, +/- 45 MINUTES)

Q + Live = killer.



To NRBQ junkies, every little thing this goofy little band puts out is solid narcotic gold. Just one hit can keep us going 'til the next show/

album/eBay fix. This here sweetness happened a quarter of a century ago, in Louisville, KY. Together with their sonic soul brothers, the Whole Wheat Horns, Q play a 45-minute killer set, casually kicking the proverbial posterior. As the classic lineup cruises through classics "Green Lights," "The Dummy Song" and their G'night-'n'-thanks-fer-comin' song, "Hit the Hay," they hit all the stops: Singer-guitarist Big Al Anderson leads a caterwauling crescendo; singer-bassist Joey Spampinato does his low-key, bizarre Paul Stanley thing; keyboardist/lead goober Terry Adams hams it up and makes playing anything with a keyboard look easy as using a microwave (drummer Ardolino keeps it parenthetically steady).

Special features: A live TV performance of "Me and the Boys"—*Harp's* advance DVD wouldn't let us access that particular tidbit. (It's probably pretty good.)

Neil Young Heart of Gold

(PARAMOUNT, +/- 103 MINUTES)

The, uh, gold standard



Somebody at *Harp* (we've narrowed it down to someone in the DVD section) keeps bitching about concert films. Slowly,

surely, this person must realize that good-nay-great performances can and do translate to film, and damn, there sure are a lot more lately (this age we live in!). *Heart of Gold*, the film Jonathan Demme made of Young's two post-aneurysm performances, is if you'll forgive the pun, the Gold Standard. Filmed on the famed Ryman Auditorium stage in Nashville (home of the Grand Ole Opry), *Heart* comprises a complete