

BLUE SUEDE NEWS

THE HOUSE ORGAN OF THE CHURCH OF ROCK 'N' ROLL

Tim Buckley / My Fleeting House / MVD Visual DR-4566

Buckley may seem a bit off our scale, but I used to play a couple of his songs during my folksy period, then lost track of him when I “sank into my dreams” to borrow a phrase from Townes Van Zandt. The DVD promised to cover the full spectrum of Tim’s career, so I asked for a copy. I knew when I went off that he was getting further out, more avant garde, but I never heard that he’d come full circle and back to funky R&B for his last 3 albums. So the DVD ended up being very satisfying for me, since Tim Buckley was a musical hero of mine at one time. Seeing him sing “Sally Go Round The Roses” and “The Dolphin” was great, and I don’t recall if I was aware that he was influenced by Fred Neil, but then that may have gone without saying or even thinking – all of us were. It was interesting to find out though, that Buckley and his lyricist Larry Beckett were offered the opportunity to write a theme song for Midnight Cowboy (the filmmakers turned down “Lay Lady Lay” from Bob Dylan!), but turned it down because Beckett was in the army at the time and they couldn’t work together. So they ended up with Neil’s “Everybody’s Talkin’”, and had it rerecorded by Harry Nilsson. The DVD is interspersed with interview bits from Al Underwood (Tim’s lead guitar player through 7 of the 9 LPs), and Beckett, plus the obligatorily nerd who analyses everything so the rest of us can understand it all. Both Underwood and this other guy have written books about Tim. For myself, I think maybe I’ll grab those last 3 LPs when I see them at a thrift store or record swap. Or even the live CD of the show from 1968 that Beckett mentions. Timbuckleydvd.com –MB

Live At The Rock’n’Roll Palace, Vol. 1 & 2 / Quantum Leap QLDVD 6548 &6549

Rock’n’Roll’s Greatest Teen Idols / Quantum Leap QLDVD 6605

The Platters & The Coasters / Quantum Leap QLDVD6548

Johnny Tillotson / Quantum Leap QLDVD6600

Bobby Vee / Quantum Leap QLDVD6606

All of this, or rather most of it, was shot Little Darlin’s in Kissimmee, Florida, apparently for a TV series which may have been called Live At The Rock’n’Roll Palace. Featured on volume 1 are **The Coasters, Tommy Sands, Del Shannon, Jive Five, Bryan Hyland, The Tokens** and **The Dixie Cups**. The cover says the **Diamonds** but our promo copy doesn’t have their segment, though I am told MVD is fixing that. Shots of the 40 and 50 somethings dancing are pretty extraneous for those of us interested in the original Rock’n’Rollers, but par for the course in a show like this. There were some highlights for me, including the Jive Five who were terrific, Del Shannon and his guitar solo on “Handy Man”, and the girl in the Dixie Cups who looks like a black Annette Funicello. Those of you who require every hairdo, outfit and guitar to be just right or your time machine won’t work will find the hair band backing many of the artists out of place, but they’re excellent musicians.

Vol. 2 Has **Johnny Thunder** (“Loop De Loop”, not the ‘70s punk guy), **The Crickets, Tommy Sands** (this time with 2 different songs, though one is the Sonny & cher thing “The Beat Goes On”), **The Platters, Johnny Tillotson, The Diamonds** (this time they really are there!), **Bobby Vee**, and **Ace Cannon**. Highlights? For me, The Platters and Ace Cannon.

The Teen Idols DVD has ‘over 30 tracks’ and includes **Bobby Vee** (you’re right, same tracks as before), **Buddy Knox, Frankie Ford, Tommy Sands** (one new track, “Graduation Day”), **Tommy Roe, Lenny Welch, Jack Scott, Ray Peterson, and Troy Shondell** plus clips from the movie Rock Rock Rock featuring **Frankie Lymon & The Teenagers, Cirno & the Bowties, and Jimmy Cavallo**. With more music and some different guys (Frankie Ford, Ray Peterson and Lenny Welch were my highlights, plus my old pal Buddy Knox) this one might be a better value. It’s possible this is the one I bought for Gaby for Christmas, can’t recall. But the icing on the cake is a Canadian Film Board mini-feature on **Paul Anka** called Lonely Boy from about 1961. You might not care for him or his sort – the guys who abandoned Rock’n’Roll as soon as possible to be something more like big band crooners – but there is a lot to be said for a fat 15 year old Canadian who can lose 60 pounds or so, write hit songs, and knows where he’s going and how to get there. That’s a tremendous amount of drive and talent, and this documentary follows him from Atlantic City to the Copacabana, with interview segments and lots of screaming hysterical girls. If this is the one I bought, I only paid about \$6 - \$8 bucks for it.

The Tillotson and Vee titles have the tracks from the other DVDs plus a bunch more, and again with the cake icing: the Tillotson DVD also features “Bonus Tracks” by the **Dovells** and **Lynn Paul**. The ‘Set 2’ stuff was recorded in a different place, The Church Street Station Theater, in Orlando. The Vee DVD has 3 more songs not seen on the other 2 DVDs, and includes 2 versions of “Rubber Ball”, plus there are 5 tunes by the **Original Juniors**. That’s a lot of stuff, and not all the DVDs from this situation. It also appears to me that in some cases the best known song by some artists appears to have been sandbagged for a separate DVD which perhaps we’ll see eventually. Or maybe there were screwups either artistic or technical that made those songs unworthy to include. Mvdvisual.com –MB

Shirelles / Quantum Leap QLDVD 6598
Martha Reeves / Quantum Leap QLDVD 6603
Tammy Wynette / Greatest Hits Live / Quantum Leap QLDVD 6587

Here's three more titles, two from the Rock'n'Roll Palace, and one from the Church Street Station show. Although there are 4 Shirelles appearing on the cover, there are only 3 in the act. They do 6 of their biggest hits, reprising "Baby It's You" at the end. The bonus tracks are the **Angels** doing their big hit plus "Til" and the same two songs from the **Dixie Cups** that appeared on the above reviewed title. They claim to have written "Iko Iko" for Red Bird Records, but it's an awful lot like Sugarboy Crawford's "Jockamo" from a few years earlier. But hey, dig their crazy romanian Princess outfits! For some reason Reeves is billed alone, although she does appear with her original Vandellas. She plays tambourine like that other Martha (Raye). The bonus feature here is **Sam Moore**, a 4 song segment that was part of another DVD we reviewed some time back.

Tammy has her own whole show, complete with 3 costume changes. Although I've heard her sound better, she looked great. She doesn't do every song I can remember her for, but does 11 including a version of the Everly Brothers' "Crying In The Rain", which I don't recall hearing from her before. Guess I missed some of them. According to the announcer at the end, Billy "Crash" Craddock was the other guest when the show aired on TNN. -MB

Here's two more titles from the Rock'n'Roll Palace, Little Darlin's. Although there are 4 Shirelles appearing on the cover, there are only 3 in the act. They do 6 of their biggest hits, reprising "Baby It's You" at the end. The bonus tracks are the **Angels** doing their big hit plus "Til" and the same two songs from the **Dixie Cups** that appeared on the above reviewed title. They claim to have written "Iko Iko" for Red Bird Records, but it's an awful lot like Sugarboy Crawford's "Jockamo" from a few years earlier. But hey, dig their crazy romanian Princess outfits! For some reason Reeves is billed alone, although she does appear with her original Vandellas. She plays tambourine like that other Martha (Raye). The bonus feature here is **Sam Moore**, a 4 song segment that was part of another DVD we reviewed some time back. -MB