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## on Buckley's "My Fleeting House"

"My Fleeting House" is a collection of classic, full-length performances, rare clips, and interviews. It has eleven songs with footage spanning the length of his career, from 1967-1974. It includes previously unreleased video of Buckley on The Steve Allen Show, The Monkees' and WITF's The Show. It features interviews with Buckley's co-writer Larry Beckett, guitarist Lee Underwood, and the author of "Dream Brother: The Lives and Music of Jeff and Tim Buckley", David Browne.

But that's not why I wanted to watch it.

Selfishly, I wanted to watch it so that I could learn more about his son, Jeff.

I'm a huge Jeff Buckley fan, and anything that might give me further insight into the short, tragic, but brilliantly bright life of Jeff's is something I wanted to see.

So I watched it. All of it.

And immediately, the first thoughts I had when watching the dated video clips of Tim performing, reminded me of an excerpt from David Browne's book where he describes a 25 year old Jeff arriving to sing at a 1991 tribute to his father:

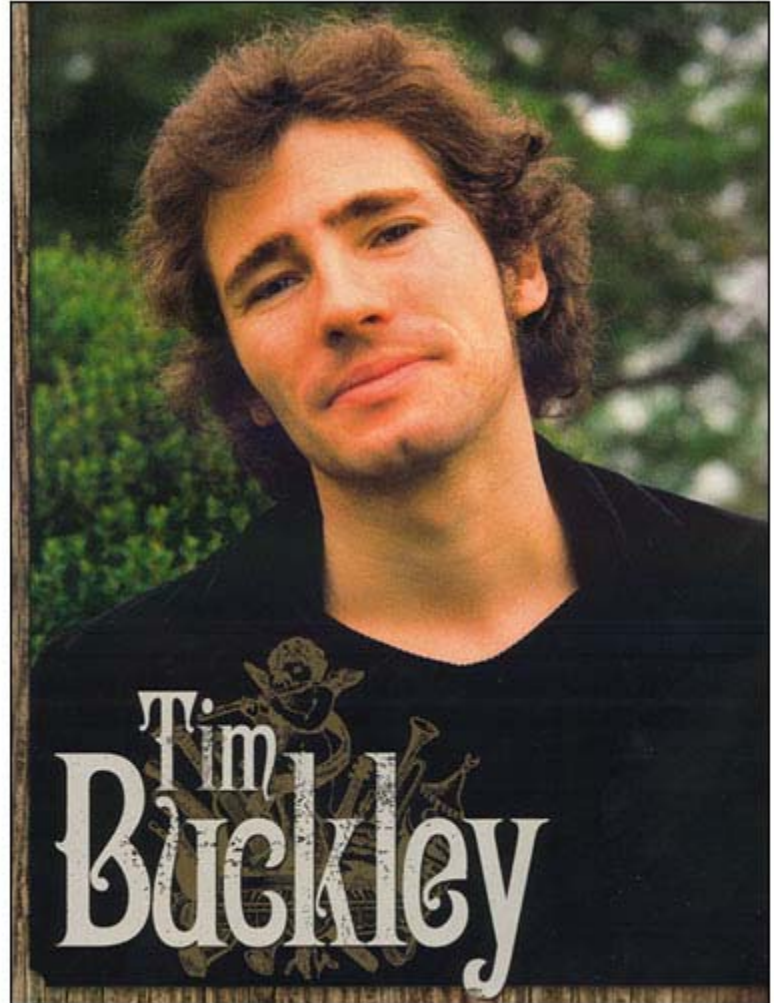
*"Standing near the elevated stage that had been erected in front of the altar, Willner had no idea what Tim Buckley's son looked like, but he stopped wondering when in walked a kid with long, lanky hair, and an earring in his left ear. It was, Willner recalls, "the kind of thing you see in your life only a few times." The sight was so spiritual that he expected to hear the sound of a heavenly choir---"aahhhhhh!"---accompanying the sight. "You must be Jeff," he said...."*

New York producer, Willner, was referring to the uncanny resemblance between father and son, and watching the clips of Tim performing, I could completely understand Willner's surreal experience seeing Jeff for the first time.

A couple of times during the video, an assembly of still photos appear on the screen where Tim's signature bushy mane of hair is gone and is replaced with a shorter, more choppy 'do....a hairstyle closer to Jeff's. The combination of the shorter hair, with his thick eyebrows, square jaw, and high cheekbones made him look even more like Jeff, and it was startling.

Not only do they resemble each other physically, but their voices are eerily alike as well. Tim had a reputed five-octave range, and Jeff was known for his three-and-a-half octave range. The one particular performance on this DVD where I heard the most Jeff coming through his father's voice was a rendition of "Come Here Woman" which reminded me of parts of Jeff's Mojo Pin and Grace.

I know, I know, this is supposed to be about Tim...not Jeff. But given the strange parallels between their lives, it's hard for me



not to compare them.

Moving on...

The DVD is chronological musical history of Tim, which follows him from his initial folk period, through his jazz period, and then into his later phases of more improvisational conceptual work, and eventually into more mainstream rock & roll.

I learned a lot about Tim and how he prioritized his art rather than conform to commercial musical expectations, even alienating his own fan base at times with the about-face stylings from one album to the next. This approach probably was part of the reason for Tim's under-recognized status in the era of more notable late 60's musicians.

Beckett and Underwood's interview clips where they speak of his skilled musicianship and how he used his beautiful Irish tenor voice as an instrument, provide a lot of insight into how talented Tim really was as well as how much respect and love they had for him.

The television clips featuring Tim performing songs, as well as short Q & A discussions on some of these old television shows, gives an amusing snapshot into the life and issues going on during the late 1960's. Hearing terms such as "cat", "groovy", "bread", and phrases like, "Ya dig?" peppered amongst the conversation is an amusing peek into our hippie past.

All that aside, focusing on just Tim and his music, you can easily get lost in it. His voice changes from lilting, gentle melodies, to primal wailing and back again. His lyrics poetic and piercing...his guitar, gentle and pure. His music surrounds and swallows the listener, and becomes timeless.

So, if you watch this DVD looking for Jeff, as I did...you will find him...in small pieces. But along the way, you might find, as I did, that you discovered his father.

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