

"Do the Strand," "Love Is the Drug," "Dance Away," "Editions of You," and "A Song for Europe," as well as solid covers of Neil Young's "Like a Hurricane" and John Lennon's "Jealous Guy." One of the highlights is the seven-minute "My Only Love," featuring an excellent solo by backup guitarist Neil Hubbard and smokin' sax accompaniment by Mackay. Those who are not big fans of Bryan Ferry (full disclosure: I love Ferry's voice) may be put off by his somewhat spacey presence, but the man can sing and this time-capsule performance will be welcomed by many. Presented in Dolby Digital stereo and PCM stereo (which sounds much fuller), this extra-less disc is recommended as a good historical complement to the more recent *Roxy Music: Live at the Apollo* (VL-9/03). Aud: P. (R. Pitman)

### Sarah McLachlan: Afterglow Live

★★★★★

(2004) 114 min. DVD: \$21.98 (CD included). Arista (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.



As we've mentioned before, the music industry—alarmed over the prospect of lost revenue from illegal downloading (through various online file-sharing programs)—is steadily increasing the number of CD/DVD hybrid releases, some offering more significant visual content than others. *Sarah McLachlan: Afterglow Live*—although sold as a music CD—is, in fact, an excellent example of the promise of hybrids, combining a 23-song, nearly two-hour 2004 live concert DVD filmed at Toronto's Molson Amphitheatre, together with a 15-cut live CD. Her first concert DVD since *Mirrorball* (1999), *Afterglow Live* finds the Canadian singer-songwriter—Gen X's own Divine Miss "M"—in very fine form, performing all but one of the 10 tunes off 2003's *Afterglow*, including the hits "Fallen," "World on Fire," and "Train Wreck." In addition, McLachlan—alternating between guitar and piano, and backed by her band—serves up beautiful renditions of earlier hits and favorites such as "Adia," "Building a Mystery," "Angel," and a haunting piano solo version of "Possession" (one of the tracks not included on the CD). Presented in Dolby Digital 5.1 and stereo, DVD extras include three music videos, a 12-minute behind-the-scenes featurette, and song lyrics. Highly recommended. **Editor's Choice.** Aud: P. (R. Pitman)

### Tension & Release: Springing the Blues 2003 ★★★

(2003) 100 min. DVD: \$19.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.

Shot at the 2003 Springing the Blues Festival in Jacksonville Beach, Florida, *Tension & Release* is a sometimes frustrating hybrid of intelligent discussion about the blues and truncated examples of great artistry. Ex-

cerpts from interviews with such legends as Otis Taylor, John Hammond, and Michael Burks are precious for their insights into the essence of the blues form, but while their music—and that of Deborah Coleman, Anthony Gomes, and Albert Castiglia—is the main event, all too often these great performances are broken up by the chatter. With that caveat, the brilliance of some of these players shouldn't be missed, including Burks' solemn, stately sound on "Don't Let This Be a Dream," Coleman's trance-inducing "The Dream," Castiglia's close-to-derailment rush on "Hoodoo Man Blues," and Hammond's dazzling take on "Buzz Fledder John." Presented in 5.1 surround sound, DVD extras include a few bonus (and uninterrupted) performances. Recommended. Aud: P. (T. Keogh)



### Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers: Live in Concert ★★★1/2

(2004) 2 discs. 109 min. DVD: \$29.98. Koch Vision (avail. from most distributors). Color cover. ISBN: 1-4172-2755-9.



Vocal heir to Bob Dylan, the blonde-mopped Tom Petty and his Heartbreakers (including the smokin' Mike Campbell on guitar and virtuoso Benmont Tench on keyboards) serve up this 20-song set (awkwardly spread over two discs) taken from a 2003 concert filmed for PBS's *Soundstage* series. Rockers expecting to hear Petty cut loose on hits such as "American Girl," "The Waiting," or "Free Fallin'," may be disappointed by this country/blues-inflected set (although the band does play "Refugee" and "I Won't Back Down"), but the open-minded will enjoy Petty and the crew playing blues with a country feel on "Born in Chicago," "Red Rooster," "Melinda" (featuring a dynamite piano jam by Tench), and the new song "Two Men Talkin'," not to mention "Handle With Care" (originally by Petty's former supergroup, the Traveling Wilburys). DVD extras on this Dolby Digital 5.1 and stereo sound disc include six bonus tracks (among them an absolutely rockin' rendition of "Yer So Bad" and a fine cover of Buddy Holly's "Not Fade Away"). Not exactly what Tom Petty fans might expect, but a rousing good time nonetheless, this is highly recommended. Aud: P. (R. Pitman)

### Vida Blue and the Spam Allstars: Live at the Fillmore ★★★

(2004) 94 min. DVD: \$19.99. Image Entertainment (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.

A little background: Vida Blue, named for the famous Oakland A's baseball legend, is a trio consisting of Phish keyboardist Page McConnell, Allman Brothers' bassist Oteil

Burbridge, and Funky Meters' drummer Russell Batiste. While the group's sound leans toward the electronic, Vida Blue's collaboration with Miami ensemble the Spam Allstars for 10 tunes on this concert disc results in many happy, funk-jazz textures reminiscent of Tower of Power and the Average White Band (whose "Pick Up the Pieces" is covered here). Caught on tape at San Francisco's Fillmore in June 2004, the merged bands are heard in disciplined fusion form on "Just Kissed My Baby," with its thick funk structures and heavy syncopation, as well as the Cuban jazz figures of "Little Miami," the saxophone-enriched "Cars Trucks Buses," and the ballad "Electra Glide," a tribute to Vida Blue's namesake (the real Blue turns up to wave at the audience). Presented in Dolby Digital 5.1 and stereo, DVD extras include a pair of featurettes. Recommended. Aud: P. (T. Keogh)



### Willie Nelson & Friends: Outlaws and Angels

★★★

(2004) 103 min. DVD: \$19.98. Eagle Eye Media (avail. from most distributors). Color cover.



Boy, it sure is swell seeing Willie Nelson share a stage with some of the folks who've had such a big impact on his career. I mean, just imagine how culturally impoverished we'd be without access to those legendary collaborations between the 71-year-old troubadour and Joe Walsh, or Carole King, or Kid Rock, or...ok, that's a little harsh. By all accounts, Nelson is a heckuva nice guy (with a lot of friends), and if some of the partnerships we see in the course of this 24-song, May 2004, made-for-TV concert (presented in Dolby Digital 5.1 and stereo) simply don't work (like the aforementioned, or the cracked duet with Bob Dylan on Hank Williams' "You Win Again"), and some reduce Willie himself to almost an afterthought (he seems particularly out of place with the Texas rock trio Los Lonely Boys), others more than make up the difference. Fellow country music elder statesman Merle Haggard is terrific, current superstar Toby Keith lends strong support on "Mama Tried" and "Pancho & Lefty," the Rev. Al Green (singing Nelson's "Funny How Time Slips Away") is always a treat, Ben Harper rocks hard on Gregg Allman's "Midnight Rider," Jerry Lee Lewis (talk about elder statesmen!) can still bring it...and what can you say about Keith Richards, the living embodiment of the ragged-but-right ethos espoused by Nelson himself? All in all, *Outlaws and Angels* is a relaxed, sometimes inspired good time. So who's next: Willie and Marilyn Manson? Jessica Simpson? Metallica? Whatever...bring it on! Recommended. Aud: P. (S. Graham)