

By Jeff Tamarkin and Phil Freeman



EASY DUB ALL-STARS: DUB SIDE OF THE MOON

Easy Star Records

Dub Side Of The Moon—a reggae rethinking of Pink Floyd's gazillion-selling *Dark Side Of The Moon* album—probably sounded on paper like a really wacky stoner-type idea that would never get off the ground. Turned out to be a fairly brilliant one in the end, a natural cultural crossover that transcended novelty and poked new life into that tired old warhorse—and attracted a grass roots fanbase. In concert in Falls Church, Virginia, the Easy Dub All-Stars elevate *Dub Side* to another level entirely. This is a genuinely exciting performance that both pays its respects and trashes conventions. A coterie of virtuosic New York musicians manages the perfect balance of roots/dub and classic rock, touching on all of the keystones of the original work while moving well beyond it. Pink Floyd, for all of their sonic ingenuity, was always a rather dull band in concert—not so the Easy Dub crew, who rightly inspire genuine fervor among their minions. Animated sequences tie the song suite together and the bonus material, though not all that illuminating, puts the phenom into perspective. Next up: Radiodread. (JT)



FLOGGING MOLLY: WHISKEY ON A SUNDAY

SideOneDummy

"We are not a traditional band," one of the members of Flogging Molly makes clear at the very start of this nearly-two-hour documentary. Indeed, they are not—not unless stage-diving has been commonplace at traditional Irish music performances of late. The L.A.-based Flogging Molly has far more in common with the rightly canonized Pogues than, say, the Chieftains and, in acoustic guitarist/vocalist Dave King, a frontman who's more Joe Strummer than, well, any Irish folkie you can name. Punk-rock anarchy may not appear to have much to say to fiddles and accordions, but Flogging Molly makes that conversation a surprisingly lively and meaningful one for sure, and they've built up a rabidly devoted following in their decade or so together. Jim Dziura's film, made over a two-year period in seven countries, presents a sometimes-interesting/sometimes-not portrait of the band and its components, dropping into the studio to watch them at work, delving into the individual lives, etc. But really, *Whiskey On A Sunday* is most effective when Flogging Molly is onstage, strumming away furiously and whipping up the faithful. The package includes a 10-song CD of live and studio tunes. (JT)



COMO SE FORMA UNA RUMBA (HOW TO CREATE A RUMBA)

MVD Music Video

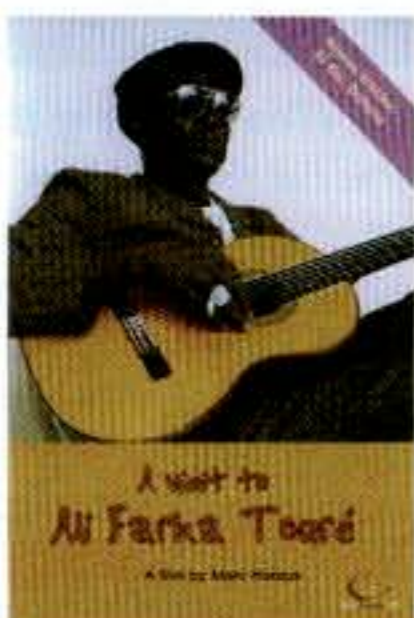
Como Se Forma Una Rumba (How to create a Rumba) does, of course, explain just how one goes about doing that, in the greater cultural sense. But Ivan Acosta's documentary does a lot more. In both an instructional and entertaining manner, it tells the story of Cuban music's many variations and its common African roots, its heartbreaks and joys and, in often emotional and revealing interviews, the reasons for its enduring vitality and popularity. Many of the greats of the Afro-Cuban genre pitch in with a story or two—some humorous, some poignant, all absorbing. And of course, there's the music, at its most fiery and arousing. Vintage historical clips of such legends as Beny Moré and Perez Prado are worth the price on their own. In Spanish, with English subtitles. (JT)



BLACK UHURU WITH SLY & ROBBIE: DUBBIN' IT LIVE

MVD Music Video

This disc documents a live reunion of sorts. Sly and Robbie, the throb and thwack behind a significant portion of the world's reggae, as well as prime movers behind the rise of dancehall (for good or ill), were the rhythm section for Black Uhuru's breakthrough—and best—albums in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when the three voices up front belonged to Duckie Simpson, Michael Rose and Sandra "Puma" Jones. This combination of three hauntingly powerful voices and the unique, unstoppable grooves of Sly and Robbie allowed the group to record timeless, classic albums. Times change, of course. Sandra "Puma" Jones died some years ago, and Michael Rose left Black Uhuru behind years before that (some of this history was most recently discussed in *GLOBAL RHYTHM's* June issue). This leaves Duckie Simpson, arguably the group's founder anyway, as the only original frontman. He's joined on this DVD by Andrew Bees and Queen Kay, neither of whom are particularly well-known, but they get the job done. This disc is strictly a retro-fied affair, anyway, as the tracks ("Party Next Door," "I Love King Selassie," "World Is Africa," "Solidarity," etc., etc.) all come from the band's truly fertile years, anyhow. Despite the top-shelf performances by all involved, this is ultimately a Black Uhuru cover band that happens to feature one original vocalist. (PF)



A VISIT TO ALI FARKA TOURÉ

Kultur/Digital Classics

This isn't a concert film, though it features plenty of musical performances by the late titan of Malian music. Rather, it's exactly what the title indicates—a document of filmmaker Marc Huraux's visit to Touré's home in Niafunke. He's shown interacting with his family, taking care of local business, going down to the river, and yes, playing music. This is possibly the best available document of Touré's well-rounded life, and will likely make longtime fans miss his presence even more acutely. As he goes about his days here, it seems likely that the decision to return to touring and making music professionally was probably a far more difficult one, for him, than the initial retirement had been. Ali Farka Touré was quite obviously a man who loved music making, but loved every other aspect of his life equally. That's a rare attitude, and it's what makes this documentary the heartwarming spectacle it is. (PF)