

Hassell's horn and the lopsided rhythmic and bass patterns make for a kind of amniotic sonic world, one with sloshing fluids and heartbeat pulsations.

John Adamian

## Grateful Dead & John Oswald

**Grayfolded** IMPORTANT

Back in 1994, the **Grateful Dead** commissioned sound architect **John Oswald** to create one of his "Plunderphonics" collages from the music contained within their archives. The resulting work, titled *Grayfolded*, compiles over 100 different performances of the song "Dark Star" recorded between 1968-1993 that have been layered, folded and manipulated to create a meta-"Dark Star" that spans nearly two hours. Split into two sections, "Transitive Axis" and "Mirror Ashes," and further divided into a series of movements, *Grayfolded* is a hallucinatory sonic journey that ventures through both the temporal and cosmic realms of "Dark Star" in ways that the Dead never physically could, such as the "Garcia choir"—a segment of young and old versions of **Jerry Garcia** singing atop one another. But aside from a few instances, most of Oswald's manipulations mainly consist of the folding and overlaying of disparate material and straight-ahead editing. Now available on vinyl for the first time courtesy of Groveland, Mass.-based experimental label Important Records, the newly reissued version of *Grayfolded* arrives in a 3-LP set. Highlights include extensive liner notes and interviews with Garcia, **Phil Lesh** and **Robert Hunter** penned by musicologist **Rob Bowman**, and two "time maps" which chart the source concerts of "Dark Star." **Sam Davis**

## Todd Rundgren

**At the BBC 1972-1982** ESOTERIC

**Todd Rundgren** made his first trip to England as a solo act in 1972 after his hit U.S. single "I Saw the Light" landed on the U.K. singles chart. He performed a 30-minute set for the BBC at London's Paris Theatre utilizing only himself, his guitar, a piano and a tape machine. It was the beginning of a long and fruitful partnership with the Beeb that is now beautifully chronicled in this four-disc box set from Esoteric Recordings. In addition to the afore-mentioned one-man-act set, *At the BBC 1972-1982* is also filled with killer performances from Rundgren's band **Utopia**, including two full sets recorded in 1975 and 1977 for BBC Radio One's "In Concert" program that showcase this underrated group's wild juxtapositions between power-pop melodies ("Do Ya") and prog-rock excess ("Utopia Theme") with equal aplomb. Meanwhile, the DVD portion of the collection contains footage of two more Utopia gigs for *The Old Grey Whistle Test*, rare footage of the band's performance at the 1977 Bearsville Picnic, as well as a 1982 solo set for OGWT that includes unaired performances of "Song of the Viking" from *Something/Anything?* as well as a great solo version of deep Utopia cut "Lysistrata."

This is an excellent addition to Rundgren's ongoing archive series. **Ron Hart**

## Jethro Tull

**War Child - The 40th Anniversary Theatre Edition** CHRYSALIS



Although, like most of the albums that preceded it, **Jethro Tull's** 1974 *War Child* was a massive success (reaching No. 2 on the *Billboard* albums chart), four decades removed, it's one of the more forgotten entries in their discography. While *Aqualung* and the epic *Thick as a Brick* and *A Passion Play* still get fired up on what's left of rock radio, when's the last time anyone thought to play a track off of this one, save, perhaps for the semi-novelty hit single "Bungle in the Jungle"? Perhaps that's because while *War Child* has its moments, it didn't break any new ground for the group—even its best songs (the dynamic prog extravaganza "Back-Door Angels," the tender acoustic ballad "Skating Away on the Thin Ice of the New Day") trod familiar ground musically and lyrically, showing little lasting power. Chrysalis Records, Tull's label then and now, surely disagrees, however. This latest in a series of deluxe Jethro Tull reissues is a major expansion—pumped up to two CDs and two DVDs, containing various remixes (Quad! Surround Sound!), orchestral versions, demos, film footage and other ephemera connected to the sessions. In all, there are more than 125 tracks in this set, and a glossy, color, 80-page booklet to boot. Then again, the purpose is to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a 10-track album that wasn't very inspired the first time around. **Jeff Tamarkin**

**Jeff Tamarkin**

## Jerry Williams

**Gone** REAL GONE



When **Jerry Williams** recorded *Gone* in 1979, it looked like he was poised for stardom. He had a notebook of solid songs in his pocket along with an all-star session band, a successful producer and a major label in his corner. Then, a severe dispute with Warner Bros., which included a restraining order against Williams, ensured that none but a few hundred promo copies were distributed. Williams ultimately got the last laugh—before he died in 2005, he retired to St. Martin on royalties from songs he wrote for Eric Clapton—but, in his lifetime, *Gone* was truly "gone." This first-time-on-CD release shows us that the songs he wrote—the down-and-dirty "Call To Arms," the backbeat groove of "Easy On Yourself," the spiritual energy of "This Song"—were as good as anything Little Feat or Atlanta Rhythm Section were doing. The playing—with cats like **Duck "Duck" Dunn** and **Jeff Porcaro**—was stellar and Williams was a strong and soulful singer. The production is a little thin, but the performances certainly weren't. So, while Williams has departed, this record is back, as it should be. Props to Real Gone for making this one "ungone." **Michael Verity**

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