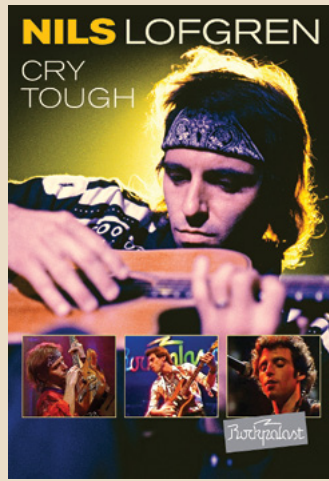




Michael Schenker
The 30th Anniversary
Concerts: Live in Tokyo



Rush
Classic Albums:
2112/Moving Pictures



Nils Lofgren
Cry Tough
Eagle Vision

Getting Their Due on DVD

While hard-rock icon Michael Schenker isn't a household name like Eddie Van Halen or Randy Rhoads (due in part to poor career decisions like quitting UFO and Scorpions just as both were poised for mass success), he remains a legendary player whose Flying-V-fueled solos lit up a generation of players.

While he's most famous for his stint in UFO, his own Michael Schenker Group was a sizable success in the 1980s. *The 30th Anniversary Concerts: Live in Tokyo* is pretty much all you'd expect from the German axeman, featuring plenty of soulful, classically infused solos. High points include

the fret-melting lead on "Let Sleeping Dogs Lie," the UFO classics "Doctor Doctor" and "Rock Bottom," and his best-known MSG track, the metal stomper "On and On." Schenker was guy who picked up the classical/blues/metal guitar thread from Ritchie Blackmore and lifted it to new levels of speed,

melody, and style. This DVD, at least, pays homage to that significant achievement.

2112/Moving Pictures celebrates another band that never quite got its due, at least not from snobby rock critics. After exploring hard rock, Rush bloomed as prog act in 1976 with *2112*, a sci-fi-themed LP that showcased the band's vision and the creative guitar skills of Alex Lifeson. Secondly, you get the story of *Moving Pictures*, which was released five years later and pushed them to supergroup status. In this DVD, you get a nice mini-history of the band's formation, interviews with the band, and studio tales about each platinum-selling album. The cruel joke, of course, is that Rush was one of the very biggest bands of the era, yet was shamefully ignored by the mainstream rock press. With this DVD (and the acclaimed documentary *Beyond the Lighted Stage*), the band is beginning to get the respect it deserves.

Last in our retrospective of underrated guitar bands and players is Nils Lofgren. This two-DVD set, *Cry Tough*, documents three concerts from Germany's "Rockpalast"

TV show, one from 1976, another from '79, and a full gig from '91. There's more than four hours of live Nils to enjoy, and it includes huge tracts of guitar work, from fingerstyle acoustic to blazing electric to slide and more. A relatively tiny guy, Lofgren looks dwarfed by Strats and acoustic dreadnoughts onstage, but his huge guitar talent quickly shuts everyone up. On electric alone, his artificial-harmonic lead technique is absolutely revolutionary – feel free to pick your jaw off the floor more than once.

Cry Tough also gives the viewer three versions of the Lofgren classic "Keith Don't Go," a paean to his Rolling Stones hero Keith Richards (check out the '76 version, where he trades solos with himself on guitar and piano). While watching, you can't help but marvel at the irony in the fact Lofgren is best-known as a sideman for Bruce Springsteen and Neil Young, yet is such a songwriting talent in his own right. Perhaps the bright side is that his famous side gigs allowed more people to become aware of his marvelous solo work. – **Pete Prown**

accompanied by historic anecdotes, melodic and harmonic analysis, notes and technical points of interest that shed light on the unusual fingerings and musical approach.

Hardly a shoddy self-published offering, *625 Alive* looks and feels like a serious opus. The paper is museum-quality, the layout exemplary and enticing, and the photography is artfully executed. Several photos are seen here for the first time.

The book contains a substantive interview with pianist Mabern, which adds much background and is peppered with insightful quotes from numerous jazz celebrities, underscoring his lasting significance.

With the "625" video, this book makes for a powerful study of the master of modern jazz guitar. – **Wolf Marshall**



**The Guitar Amplifier
Player's Guide**
By Dave Zimmerman

Createspace Publishing

The founder of Maven Peal Instruments, Dave Zimmerman knows guitar amps. A graduate of the University of Washington with a Masters degree in Electrical Engineering, his book distills his wide-ranging knowledge and takes the reader through the journey of un-

derstanding great amp tone and how to achieve it by making simple tweaks to a rig.

There are plenty of books about how tube amps work, but Zimmerman focuses on how to make them sound better, using straightforward mods. He also recognizes certain amps that may not be recognized by tone snobs.

There are charts, a glossary of terms, and in-depth discussion of cords and cables, but arguably the best thing is that it offers something for everyone – tips for pros as well as plenty of information for newbie modifier. Plus, it's laid out in a clear manner, using graphics and diagrams. – **ECS**



**People You'd Like
to Know: Legendary
Musicians Photographed**
By Herb Wise

Vision On Publishing

This superb new collection of photographs shows a fascinating variety of blues, folk, and rock performers as they appeared at events across North America in the second half of the 20th century.

The photos were all taken by Herb Wise, who learned the craft from David Gahr, the revered photographer of American folk-music performers. Wise

became a fixture at many of the leading music festivals – his easy, unobtrusive style resulted in a wealth of revealing and affectionate shots.

Here, Wise captures Bob Dylan, Frank Zappa, David Bowie, and Chuck Berry in full flower, while James Taylor, Johnny Shines, Joan Baez, and Taj Mahal are caught in more private moments. There are unaffected, natural pics of John Lee Hooker, Ray Charles, and Steve Winwood, plus rare shots of Duane Allman with a Stratocaster, Leslie West with a Dan Armstrong Ampeg guitar, and Jackson Browne with a Gurian acoustic. There are audience photos from the festival period, as well as a variety of lesser-known musicians performing or relaxing.

The starkness of Wise's black-and-white photography is offset by its clarity and revealing shadows in facial expressions and visual sharpness. Most of the photos are previously unpublished and reproduced on high-quality paper. – **ECS**



**The Illustrated
Discography of Surf
Music, 1961-1965 (4th
edition)**

By John Blair

JB Publishing

Surf music was popular for a brief

time in the early '60s, but in its formative years, the reverb-drenched twang had an inordinate influence on the direction of many a rock band, showing up in everything from movies to fashion to literature. Today, it continues to enjoy a revival every half-decade or so.

Surf-music historian John Blair published the first version of this book in 1978, and it has grown into a true encyclopedia, with documentation on bands, record labels, singles, albums, players, and everything else related to the genre. Also greatly improved are layout and graphics; this new edition features record labels and LP covers shown in full-color, which brings an improved visual immediacy to the proceedings. And Blair is particular in his classification, offering a clear definition of the elements of surf music in his introduction. Certainly, some of the most important information in the book involves instruments and gear, but other musical subjects include surfing, cars, girls, even the weather. The Forward by Dick Dale is cool, and the index is comprehensive and useful.

In the internet age, anyone can set themselves up as an "expert." But books like this – researched and written by a true expert – do a great job documenting the facts. For the real 4-1-1 on surf music, this book is the one to have. – **ECS**