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DVD Video Reviews

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Ford Blues Band (2005)

Topnotch blues from a California quartet performing for a German audience



Ford Blues Band (2005)

Studio: Inakustik GmbH & Co./Music Video Distributors

Video: 1.33:1 Full Frame

Audio: DD 5.1, PCM 2.0

Extras: Interview with the Producer, "Ohne Filter" Shows, Artist Biography, Sound Tuning

Length: 60 minutes

Rating: ***1/2

The current lineup of the Ford Blues Band consists of Patrick Ford on drums, Andy Just on harp and vocals, Volker Strifler on guitar and vocals, and Dewayne Pate on vocals and bass. The Ford brothers Robben and Patrick hail from a small town in California called Ukiah in Mendocino County. In 1969 they headed off to follow a musical career. Their father was a guitarist who sang country music and blues to the boys at a young age. Robben Ford started with the saxophone, but changed to the guitar instead. Pat was happy on drums and their younger brother, Mark, favored the harmonica. The brothers came upon some blues music at the record store (that was there by mistake) and their fondness for the blues grew stronger and stronger. At first, the band was called The Charles Ford Band and even opened for Muddy Waters. The band broke up soon after and though there were a few reunions never came back together. In 1988 Pat decided it was time to continue the tradition with the Ford Blues Band.

The German Ohne Filter shows highlight solid acts that would probably never get airplay on television in the United States. This performance was recorded on August 8 1998 and sees the band in excellent form—you can see this in their enthusiasm, confidence, and comfort with one another. Many of the tunes have extensive harmonica playing and though the vocals aren't heavy and rough like some artists, the softer

vocals play well with the music. The surrounds are put into use mainly for ambience and this mix works well too. Most of the material is upbeat and lively, although "She's Sweet" is a slower, blues tune where some of the lead vocals are whispered (that's right, no need to check your center channel connection). Apart from one or two songs the majority of the music is top-notch. It's a fun listen and will help get your mood up if you happen to really have the blues. The interview is the same as the one on the other Ohne Filter disc reviewed recently. Songs included: It's Hot; Watch Yourself; She's Sweet; Don't Cry; Crazy For My Baby; I Smell Trouble; Lovin' Cup; Bring It to Jerome; Cadillac; Tell Me Mama.

-Brian Bloom

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