

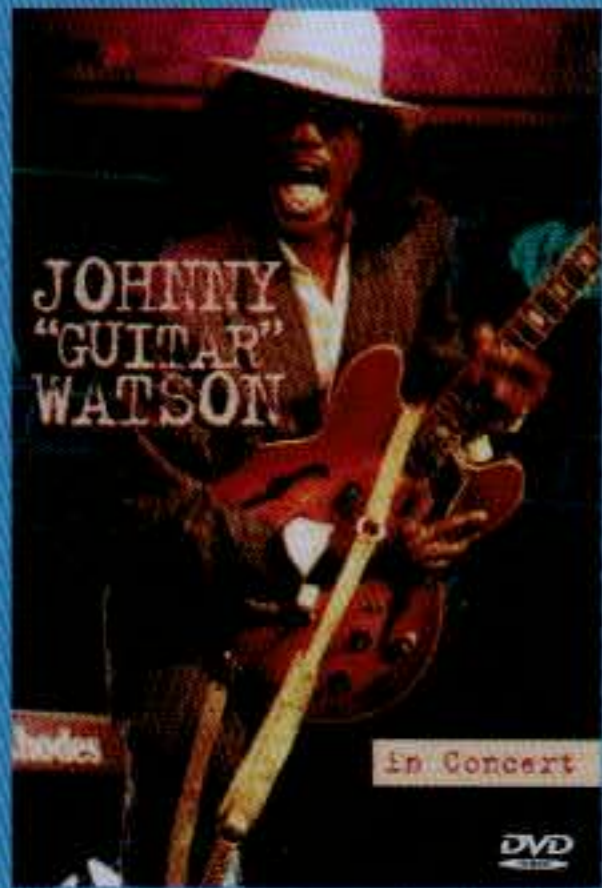


## King Curtis

*Sweet Soul/Everybody's Talkin'*  
(Ambassador Soul Classics)

R&B sax legend King Curtis would be more of a household name had he not died so early. His robust sound made him the first call horn man for legends like Otis Redding and Aretha Franklin.

This CD culls two of his albums onto one CD, making for a cool 21-song overview. Personally, it's all about the second album for me, which was, sadly, King's last. It contains a version of folkie Tim Hardin's "If I Were a Carpenter" that is among the most soulful grooves the man ever transformed! There are also two priceless versions of the song "Riding Thumb" the latter being an in-studio jam session featuring **Billy Preston** on organ, **Chuck Rainey** on bass and **Bernard Purdie** on drums. With liner notes by **David Nathan**, this is a nice introduction to the fallen soul man.



## Johnny "Guitar" Watson

*In Concert* DVD (Inakustik)

The beauty of concert DVDs is getting to see the performances of people you missed while they were here. The perplexing thing is when those concerts are nothing like what you expected. Personally, judging from this R&B/blues legend's album covers, I just knew ol' "Guitar" would be pimped out on a throne pickin' off tasty blues solos and ne'r breakin' a sweat. WRONG! On this DVD (taped for Germany's "Ohne Filter" TV show on July 2, 1990), the man dances over

every inch of the stage, jumps into the audience and does songs at double the tempo of the album versions. At age 55, he was fronting a four-piece rhythm section (w/ a female drummer) and a trio of horns. Among the 10 tunes are all of his biggest hits - from the ancient career starters "Three Hours Past Midnight" and "Gangster of Love" (in two versions, including an extended bonus take from 1987) to his '70s smashes "Superman Lover," "I Wanna Ta-Ta You," "A Real Mutha For Ya" and, of course, "Ain't That A Bitch." Six years later - on a comeback tour in Japan - Johnny "Guitar" Watson died of a heart attack walking out onto a concert stage. With no disrespect, after watching this DVD, one can completely understand why.

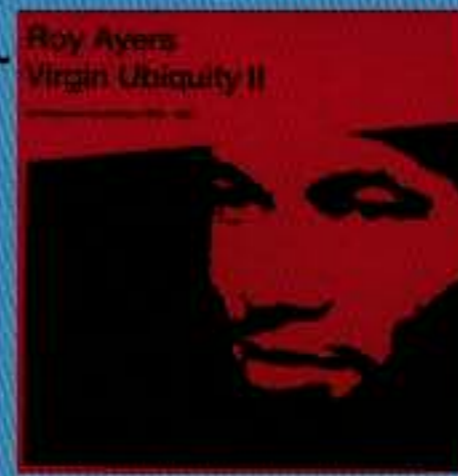


## John Scofield Plays The Music of Ray Charles

(Verve)

The guitarist waxes a good old-fashioned tribute to Ray with this mixed bag project. He's got a great band helmed by producer/drummer **Steve Jordan** with **Willie Weeks** on bass and **Larry Goldings** on

organ, Wurlitzer, piano and vibes. Personally, I'm feelin' instrumentals like "Sticks and Stones" and the supremely pocketed "Unchain My Heart," but radio will probably gravitate to vocals like the tender "You Don't Know Me" (f/ **Aaron Neville**) and a wrenching "I Can't Stop Loving You" (f/ **Mavis Staples**). There's something for everybody, but the treatments are so varied, it's hard to listen to it all in one sitting.



## Roy Ayers

*Virgin Ubiquity II* (BBE)

The godfather of the Acid Jazz movement scours his plethora of unreleased gems for a second edition of this winning series. One wonders how he was able to retain control of these demos

and working masters (many with full horn and string arrangements) from his then-label, Polydor. More power to the people! This 13-song collection includes a demo for "Everybody Loves The Sunshine" as well as a mellow plea for a "Holiday" for Martin Luther King (Stevie's "Happy Birthday" became the rallying anthem for this). There's a funky Latin guajira about keeping a positive mental attitude called "I Am Your Mind, Part 2." The sexy "I Like The Way" (w/ female vocal) is appropriately steamy, and there are several club-ready grooves for folks to grip their hips and move to. A couple of cheesy numbers like the vocal "Third Time" and the instrumental "Tarzan" could have stayed in the vault, but then again, projects like this are ultimately to get this stuff in the open air and let the fans decide. Twenty years after the fact, a man as industrious as Mr. Ayers surely isn't trippin' about "artistic integrity"...especially if it means a lil' mo' money in the pocket!



## Marion Williams

*Remember Me* (Shanachie)

The gospel legend is celebrated with a 24-song overview distinguished by 12 previously unreleased performances of signature pieces, including a rousing

version of "How I Got over (Live in Church)" backed by **James Cleveland** that is electrifying via her interaction with the congregation. Also amazing are her version of "God Bless The Child," "Take My Hand Precious Lord," "Press On Like The Bible Said" and "Surely God is Able." Includes a 24-page booklet with rare photos and track by track analysis by producer **Tony Heilbut**.



## Gerald Veasley

*at The Jazz Base* (Heads Up)

The veteran bassist and member of Pieces of a Dream turns in an intimate live set - at his VERY OWN CLUB: the 150-seat Jazz Base (in Reading,

Pennsylvania). The CD is comprised of 8 live fan faves (including "Coupe de Ville," "Bread Puddin'," "The Spy is Back" and a cover of Donny Hathaway's "Valdez in the Country"), plus two new studio tracks, including "Celebrating Siphon," a tribute to South African bassist Siphon Gumede who died of cancer before a promised collaboration with Veasley.