

The Electric Review

SHOWCASING MVD

SETTING THE STANDARD FOR IN-CONCERT CINEMA

By John Aiello

"MVD" stands for *Music Video Distributors*, a Pennsylvania-based company dedicated to the production of music-related media and specializing in the distribution of music DVDs to the world market.

It's true that most video companies have a music-based line of product, but MVD has set itself apart from the competition by virtue of the attention it pays to its artists. Once MVD commits to a project, it does not do so with half focus, but instead, vigorously promotes and publicizes each new release, like the spirits of Chet Helms and Bill Graham suddenly reincarnated, this vision to bring the music back to the people in an ultra-personal and specialized form.

In essence, many video distributors use music releases to fill up their catalog -- the genre is ancillary and not central to their product list, a 'filler' that plays second fiddle to the drama shelf and the sci-fi section. However, with MVD, music is the very centerpiece of the jewel, and its energies are invested in the task of bringing the real-time concert experience to the controlled setting of your living room.

MVD, now 20 years old, was founded in 1986 on the heels of the "MTV Generation" by Tom Seaman (an industry veteran with more than 40 years experience in the field). Seaman came to create MVD after stints with Record Hunter, Sam Goody, Musicland, CBS Retail, and Jem Records -- this varied background offering him the unique opportunity to see into the living heart of the music business from myriad perspectives.

Initially, Seaman's MVD acted primarily as a "one-stop," buying up other labels' music-related VHS releases and reselling these products to music and video stores. However, as technology changed and the scope of the market grew, MVD moved head-long into DVDs, using its strong relationships with the whole of the business (content holders, labels, artists, management) to become a name that's now synonymous with *music-cinema*.

Upon its genesis in the mid 1980s, MVD committed itself to forging new roads, stepping out, enriching the depth of its catalog with gems culled from the American music scene. To this end, more changes loom on the horizon:

"We are launching an audio division next week" [*June 12, 2006*], MVD Chief Operating Officer Ed Seaman says with a deep mix of pride and enthusiasm. "We've done a great job [on the film end of the spectrum], and we have the infrastructure wholly in place, so now we're finally making the leap to distribute CDS -- the content to be driven by our suppliers in the Music DVD world."

Over the past two decades, MVD has released some 500 music DVDs, with so many high-points it is almost unfathomable. Notable selections include **CLASSIC RHYTHM & BLUES VOLUMES 3 AND 4; THIRD WORLD - "Music Hall in Concert;" JOHNNY GUITAR WATSON - "Music Hall In Concert;" BOB DYLAN - "1975-1982: Rolling Thunder and The Gospel Years;"**and the forthcoming selection by the **ROLLING STONES - "Under Review 1962 - 1966."**

In addition to its work as an internationally recognized distributor, MVD also develops and releases its own music DVD content, both creating and circulating what has become a unique component to the realm of 21st-century art.

For MVD, the future only seems to be about the music, about rehonoring the best elements of its own past:

"As we go forward," notes Seaman, "we want to keep doing everything we have been doing from day one - filming new concerts, uncovering and releasing more archive materials; plus, we intend to keep working on finding and clearing materials on previously undocumented bands. Our mission is to keep finding sources of great music and deliver what people really want."

See mydb2b.com for more information on DVDs.

