

These two acoustic projects, a reissue (minus two tracks) of his 1998 Black Top album *Red Mud* and a 60-minute documentary film, actually have a lot in common. The majority of the dozen sound-stage studio performances that comprise the DVD are inspired solo renditions of most of *Red Mud*'s songs with the unfortunate exception of the puissant, world-weary King original "Raining Angels" that closes the CD. Non-*Red Mud* selections on the DVD include a compelling version of Bob Marley's anthem-like "Redemption Song," a potent, Tommy Johnson-intense reading of "John Law Burned Down the Liquor Sto'," the pathos-laced ballad "Me, My Guitar and the Blues" and the blues/rap amalgam "Kkkcrossroads."

*Sessions* was recorded in New Orleans with King over-dubbing a variety of instruments (on "Juke Joint" he sits on a stool playing tidy guitar and occasional harmonica) joined by drummer Darryl White on only three songs. The stripped-down arrangements result in a more harrowing sound that proves especially penetrating on originals such as "Alive," "Wanna Die with a Smile on My Face," the graphic title cut and a talk-box infused cover of Robert Johnson's "Come On in My Kitchen." All of which also appear on the DVD which, by the way, would have benefitted from a tighter narrative, more club footage and some conversation with King's father. We see him unloading and packing beer in ice and tuning his guitar but little else. The focus seems to be way more on King and his music rather than on the now bulldozed juke joint that spawned it. — GvonT

#### LEO KOTTKE

*Home and Away Revisited*  
Music Video Distributors 0503 (DVD)

This is a 1988 Toronto Leo Kottke solo concert, just Leo and 6- or 12-string guitar. It was one of his really good nights. He's in great spirits and playing and singing wonderfully. The program splits nicely between instrumentals and vocals with plenty of his best-loved pieces. As is his wont, he sometimes meanders through some pretty hilarious stories between songs. The sound is excellent.

Now, Leo and guitar straight through might feel pretty static after awhile. But the filmmakers had a swell idea. They had Leo show some of his favorite places in and around his Minnesota home, from his guitar room and the "lab" in his garage to boating on the nearby lake. They also taped vignettes in a visit to Nashville. One of these is a pretty astounding jam with Leo, Doc Watson and Chet Atkins. Occasionally placing these bits between songs helps keep

things interesting. They add intimacy and insight into the man and the artist.

The "special features" section adds an extra 15 minutes of vignettes. Some are talk, but there are dressing room jams with Michael Hedges and Michael Johnson, plus Leo playing something gorgeous for a *Nashville Now* soundcheck. And there is a chance meeting with John Hartford in a Nashville record store, too.

Anyone familiar with Leo Kottke will eat this DVD up. For the uninitiated it can serve as the perfect introduction to a wonderful and most singular artist. — MT

#### COREY HARRIS

*Teaches Blues Guitar*  
from Mississippi to Mali  
Homespun COR-GT21 (DVD)

#### DEL REY

*Boogie Woogie Guitar*  
Homespun DEL-GT21 (DVD)

Here are two very different videos from Homespun, both by experienced teachers; each tabbed by the masterful John Roberts (best scribe in the instructional industry). Both teach the blues, and both deserve high praise. I'm reviewing them to-

gether because their differences are worth noting. Corey's is good for the experienced beginner through intermediate player; for that same intermediate, Del's will give you something to shoot for, but probably prove frustrating. That doesn't make it bad, just highly advanced.

Let's start with Corey. Since I first met him in 1996, he has studied with several West African musicians, notably the late Ah Farka Toure and Mohamed Kouyate. Long story short, Corey takes his roles as student and teacher of black music very seriously, and has visibly matured into it. The first few pieces he teaches — "High Fever Blues," "C.C. Pill" and "Jack O' Diamonds" — are presented largely without adornment. The first is in C, the second in Vestapol (here, open E), the third open and using a slide. With his fourth piece, the self-penned "King Cotton," he begins incorporating rhythmic left-hand chokes and trills learned from his Malian mentors, thus linking his blues seamlessly to the Motherland. He does more of the same with Skip James's "Special Rider Blues" (open E minor), and heads full tilt for home with two fairly simple African pieces, "Bajourou" by the late Toure, and a lovely, serene piece by Mohamed Kouyate called "Sundiata."

Corey doesn't analyze much of what he does, and doesn't bother naming techniques

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