



BILL MONROE
Father of Bluegrass
Music DVD

(MVD Visual)

Bill Monroe, undisputed father of bluegrass music, was born on September 13, 1911 in Rosine, Kentucky

and, with two older musical brothers, was exposed to music at an early age. Both parents were musically inclined as well, but after their deaths, Monroe lived with his uncle, renowned fiddler Pendleton Vandiver, for almost two years. A local black blues guitarist named Arnold Schultz was also a major influence on him. Monroe's band, the Blue Grass Boys, came into being in the early '40s and defined the genre. It has been estimated that over 150 musicians, including some of the biggest names in bluegrass, passed through the ranks of this band over an almost 60-year period until Monroe's death on September 9, 1996. Monroe was known as a demanding individual who insisted that his band strictly follow his personal musical lead and was famous for

carrying grudges for long periods of time.

The DVD revolves around an interview with Monroe conducted by John Hartford that traces his musical history from the early years through the '90s. Archival footage includes the Blue Grass Boys performing when Earl Scruggs and Lester Flatt were members, as well as an historic band reunion with Del McCoury, Chubby Wise and Bill Keith. Other guest appearances include Emmylou Harris, Paul McCartney, Dolly Parton, Marty Stuart, Ricky Skaggs, Jerry Garcia, Roy Acuff, the Osborne Brothers and Peter Rowan, among others. This DVD presents an impressive living record of the historical development of bluegrass, beginning and ending with the originator himself, Bill Monroe.

—Scott Peavler

BLUES GUITAR HEROES NIGHT WITH COCO MONTOYA & POPA CHUBBY

NYC Rockin' the River Cruises

The Hudson River and surrounding waters turned red hot with two of the finest blues guitarists around plying their craft. The opening set was another fine showcase for Popa Chubby and his band, which included Richard Monica (drums), AJ Pappas (bass) and Galea (bass/vox). Popa and the band blew everyone away with standouts "Motorcycle Mama," "Sally Likes to Run" and a great cover of "Hey Joe." Popa proved, once again, that homegrown NYC blues-rock just doesn't get any better than this.

Closing out the evening was one of the true masters of the blues, Coco Montoya, rocking the boat with his strong guitar licks and steaming vocals. Along with his band, Brant Leeper (keyboard), Jason Langley (bass) and Randy Hayes (drums), Coco provided a shattering set of the blues. "Fool in Love" and the encore, "I Need Your Love in My Life," were just two of the tunes that defined Coco and his band as blues royalty.

As usual on these cruises, about a third of the people aboard were tourists who just came to see the NYC skyline. It was amazing, but not unexpected, to see them forget why they were there as they focused on the artists in attendance. I felt extremely lucky to have been a part of this evening.

—Ronnie K.