

## The Rolling Stones Under Review: 1967-1969

★★★  
*Chrome Dreams/Sexy Intellectual*  
 SIDVD 531

### Death-of-a-dream era churned out in a sleepwalk

Not so much a celebration of the Stones, rather an evocation of a capricious society: flower-power is out, Satan is in. This tempestuous era is documented quite vacuously by journalists dressed up in pseudo-academia, insisting upon the overnight transition from love to the dark side, by both band and hippified generation.

This is predictably personified by the deaths of Meredith Hunter and Brian Jones. The accompanying rhetoric argues that the era died with them, yet they still have more life than this documentary. It wants to leave a footprint but fails to stamp discernment on to a story told countless times before and occasionally drowns in sycophancy. There is nothing here which hasn't been heard or read before. Regrettably, even the purported "rare musical performances" aren't enough to absolve it from mediocrity. There are no complete songs, just mere 30-second revisits to *Rock & Roll Circus* and *One Plus One*.

This may all have been slightly mitigated if the film had committed to some better archive material, or more engaging personalities than the usual suspect journalists. As it stands, this addition to the series is neither particularly entertaining nor edifying. *Laith Al-Kaisy*

## Patti Smith: Under Review

★★★★★  
*Chrome Dreams/Sexy Intellectual*  
 SIDVD 529

### Long overdue tribute to the Field Marshal Of Rock'n'Roll

Patti Smith is one of the special ones, her contribution to rock'n'roll infinitely more than a massive Bruce Springsteen cover nearly 30 years ago. This is the first documentary to tell her story in any great detail, showing that the *Under Review* treatment often works best when it's virgin territory, as proved by the recent Byrds epic.

Patti's effect on anyone, from those experiencing her in concert, to producers forced to re-examine the way they approach music, is well represented, along with her role in redefining the position of women in rock with defiance and pure emotion.

Interviewees include former boyfriend, Blue Öyster Cult guitarist Albert Bouchard, who used Patti's early lyrics on tracks such as Vera Gemini, engineers from the first two albums and a cut-above selection of critics, including Robert Christgau, Mark Paytress and Jon Savage, who do a great job explaining Patti's importance. The familiar mid-70s NYC gestation highlights include *Radio Ethiopia* producer Jack Douglas' account of the recording of the album's improvised title track during a hurricane. After her Field Marshal Of Rock'n'Roll stances, the section on the death of

husband Fred "Sonic" Smith is particularly moving. Patti Smith can never fail to be inspiring in any context. *Kris Needs*

## Sparks

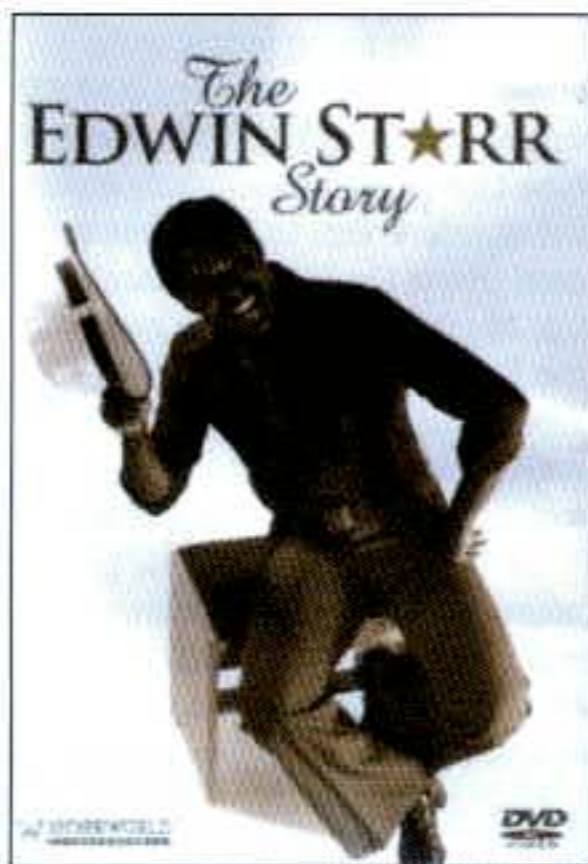
### Dee Vee Dee: Sparks At The London Forum

★★★★★  
*Liberation Entertainment,*  
 cat no tbc

### Something for the fan with everything

A Sparks show! A Sparks show! It is indeed a Sparks show, and all that entails: the wondrous magic, the clever stupidity, the whole shebang. Recorded at London's Forum in 2006, at the end of the touring cycle that saw the group play various festivals around the world to promote *Hello Young Lovers*, this shows a band assured and confident, in real need of breaking out from cult status back to wider-scale success again.

The staging, stagecraft and humour are remarkable. The backdrops to Here Kitty, Ron Mael getting knocked out by the film of himself in *The Very Next Fight* and the ironic gung-ho footage of (Baby Baby) Can I Invade Your Country write their smartness large. However, this humour is inclusive, and the crowd, when they finally do ignite, are all in on the joke. Of the second half's showcase of older material, Tryouts For The Human Race and When Do I Get To Sing "My Way" are among the many highlights. Here's to the brothers' next album, then, which can surely now be not so far away. *Daryl Easlea*



## Edwin Starr The Edwin Starr Story

★★★★★  
*Wienerworld WNRD 2432*  
**Remembering a great Starr of soul**

No soul artist inspired more affection among UK fans than Edwin Starr. This DVD takes a long look at his life and career, with plenty of concert footage and interviews with Starr and those who knew him: his brother and bandleader Angelo, his manager Lillian and man-about-soul Ian Levine.

Extensive concert clips show what we're missing: hits including Stop Her On Sight and War, as well as classics such as I Get The Sweetest Feeling, exude the energy and style which characterised Starr's singing. The shows date from the early 21st Century, with Edwin's soaring, innately soulful voice undiminished

by the passing years. And what a showman: clad in a lemon-yellow suit, making instant eye contact with his audience at a theatre gig, and brightening up a rain-soaked festival, backed by immaculate band. Most of all, we're reminded of Edwin's ability to tingle your spine with a single note.

The interviews map his career from his Ohio boyhood, through the Ric-Tic and Motown years, to Northern soul stardom and his successful comebacks with disco tunes (more accurately, great soul with a disco beat) and for Levine's Motorcity. "I don't know how we can ever replace him," says Levine. We can't, but this is a marvellous tribute. *Mike Atherton*

## Stiff Little Fingers Still Burning: The Story Of Stiff Little Fingers

★★★★★  
*Freemantle Media FHED 2069*  
**Nothing suspect about this device**

Don Letts' biography of SLF whizzes through 30 years of the Belfast band with all the aplomb you'd expect. Essentially a series of talking heads tell the tale,

interspersed with clips of the group playing live in concert with their contemporary line-up. Jake Burns is eloquent and honest throughout and a cast of characters similarly offer up their insider viewpoints, from Ali McMordie and original drummer Brian Falloon, to semi-legendary manager Gordon Oglyvie and Alan Parker.

The hour-and-a-half of the main feature is an enjoyable romp through the years. Refreshingly, each era of the group is dealt with in almost equal screentime. The extras are what will make this a near-essential purchase for the fan. The additional interviews are numerous and lengthy, including further observations from England Under-21s boss Stuart Pearce and The Alarm's Mike Peters. Forty minutes of the 2007 30th anniversary concert that forms the bulk of the cutaways from the main feature is also presented in its effervescent and sweaty glory. Though it's billed as the first ever performance of *Inflammable Material* in its entirety, thankfully there's no sign of the godawful Closed Groove. We'll not say anything if you don't. *Joe Shooman*

## Thin Lizzy Live & Dangerous

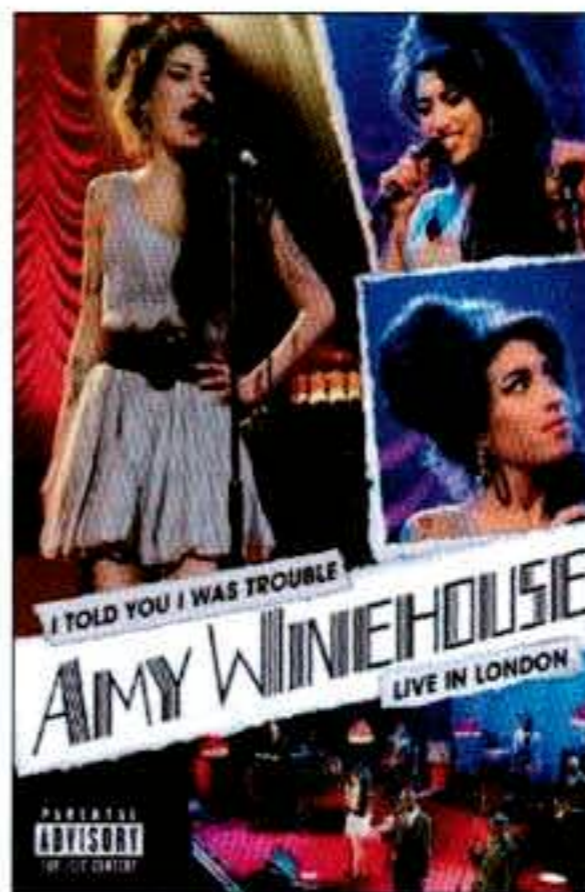
★★★★★  
*Universal/Vertigo, cat no tbc*  
 (BVD+CD)

### Classic 1978 movie, with knobs on

While overusing the term "legendary" is a persistent irritant to all at RC Towers, with everyone and his dog acquiring that status for simply *being* for more than 10 years, it's rightly applied to this 11-song set. The Gorham-Robertson axis are at the height of their superlative live powers, fuelled by the rhythms of Brian Downey and the truly legendary frontman Phil Lynott. It's a set mixing classics

such as The Boys Are Back In Town and Still In Love With You (mistitled Call On Me) with less-lauded fare such as the non-studio B-side Me & The Boys. It reminds us what all the fuss was about.

While the 1977 show from London's Rainbow is well-trodden territory, two hours of bonus material includes Gorham, Robertson and Downey harking back to that heady night. Eight audio tracks from a 1975 show in Derby are unveiled for the first time on a bonus CD, including the likes of Suicide and Cowboy Song. Meanwhile, on the DVD front, the BBC archives are raided for a 1983 *Sight & Sound In Concert* (another eight piledrivers), while five performances from *Top Of The Pops* include Whiskey In The Jar and Don't Believe A Word. In this instance, do. Legendary! *Tim Jones*



## Amy Winehouse I Told You I Was Trouble/Live In London

★★★★★  
*Universal/Island, cat no tbc*  
**A timely reminder of her greatness**

Let's try to forget Amy's ongoing tabloid profile and focus on the fact that she released one of the most acclaimed albums of last year. *Back To Black* was a surprisingly mature and sophisticated record from one so young, a high point in British soul music, and this DVD rightly celebrates the achievement.

The 50-minute documentary brings together short TV clips from the UK and the US, early audition footage from her record company's vaults, all interspersed by comments from her cab-driving dad Mitch. It successfully paints a portrait of an intelligent and driven performer, although it perhaps understandably touches only briefly on her emotional difficulties and questionable appetite for the high life. The live footage, from a twice-postponed show at Shepherds Bush Empire, is glorious, Winehouse and her exemplary band discovering fresh nuances in the now-familiar album material and having a blast on smartly-chosen covers (Lauryn Hill's Doo Wop (That Thing), The Specials' Hey Little Rich Girl).

Whether her much-publicised problems will hamper her efforts to match the triumphs of *Back To Black* remains to be seen. This release more than confirms that 2007 was Winehouse's year, and it would be a hellish pity if it were her only one. *Terry Staunton*

## Walk The Line: 3-Disc DVD Collector's Edition

★★★  
*20th Century Fox, cat no tbc*  
 (2-DVD+CD)

### The last word on Cash early years biopic (hopefully)

By now every Cash fan will have seen the well-meaning but ultimately flawed *Walk The Line*, wherein Joaquin Phoenix has a really rather good stab at capturing the heart and passion of The Man In Black's early years, his self destruction and obsession with June Carter Cash (as played by Reese Witherspoon). Couched in a love-conquers-all story, it's entertaining and a nice watch, but takes its fair share of artistic license. Anyone who knows their real Cash from their counterfeit tales can't fail to question the somewhat rose-tinted happy-ever-after ending.

This Collector's Edition is worth the investment if you're a big fan. Most of us, however, will probably just wonder who really wants to listen to the third disc, the soundtrack CD of hits as performed by the actors. Good as their impersonations are, it's just high-profile karaoke. Most will probably have more fun with the accompanying book, which presents the tablatures for the soundtrack songs. You could, of course, use this to record your own disc of Cash songs, though you'll probably go back to the original recordings and wonder whether the milking of Cash's legacy will ever end, now that it's extended to the biopic as well. *Jason Draper*

## DVDs In Brief

### • The 25th Anniversary Of The Marquee Club (★★★★ Angel Air)

gathers 90 minutes of footage from the 1983 celebrations, with tracks from bands as diverse as Osibisa, Nazareth and Cherry Bombz. Also among the 15-strong prog/blues-leaning mix are bigger names such as Status Quo, Ten Years After, Dr John and Man.

### • QUEENSRÛCHE *Mindcrime At The Moore* (★★★★★ Warners)

2-DVD captures Geoff Tate et al rendering all 32 tracks from their two-part magnum opus concept albums, recorded in Los Angeles in 2006. The package adds a couple of encores and 29 minutes of extras, including a VH-1 TV featurette, an on-the-road documentary and a live cut.

### • *Roadrunner Roadrage*

(★★★★ Roadrunner) gathers 35 clips from a host of mainly metal bands, ranging from the noisier likes of Trivium and Machine Head to the prog-metal intricacy of Dream Theater. Bigger names include Slipknot, while much of the remaining material is from the likes of Killswitch Engage and Stone Sour. As a low-priced intro, it does the job.

### • JETHRO TULL *Live At Montreux 2003* (★★★★ Eagle Rock)

sees Ian Anderson and the chaps on inimitably bouncy form, running through 19 songs, old and older, in alternately acoustic and then electric mode. Among the highlights are a Christmas version of Bourée and God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen. *Tim Jones*